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# New helps to a holy lent

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NEW HELPS

TO

A HOLY LENT

BY THE  
*Frederic Dan*  
RT. REV. F. D. HUNTINGTON, D. D.  
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AUTHOR OF 'HELPS TO A HOLY LENT' CHRISTIAN BELIEVING AND LIVING," ETC., ETC.



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## NEW HELPS TO A HOLY LENT.

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### Ash-Wednesday.

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Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the Lord of Hosts.

The Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his Temple.

He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness. I am the Lord. I change not.

Ask and ye shall receive; seek and ye shall find.

Bring ye all the tithes into the store-house, . . . and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of Hosts, if I will not open you the windows of Heaven and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room to receive it.

And He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee; for My strength is made perfect in weakness.

IF we begin Lent with holy fear, determined in earnest to deny ourselves in some way or other; if we go on soberly in that mind, and if we are not too impatient for comfort, we shall find before long that



comfort comes. It may not come so soon as we had wished or imagined ; it may not come in the particular way we should have chosen ; for awhile it may not seem to come at all ; but come it will, sooner or later, to them that in humble obedience resign themselves to the want of it.

At the beginning of the forty days, to look forward to spending them strictly, (strictly, in such measure as health and other duties may allow,) would be to most of us a bleak, dreary kind of thought ; it would require faith to make up our minds to do so. A difference in diet day after day ; more frequent prayer ; keeping ourselves from some customary diversions ; doing, in short, something or other, whatever our conscience well directed tells us is best, to mortify our souls and bodies, this is what no one naturally likes ; no one of his own pleasure would look forward to it for six or seven weeks together. But those who have in some small measure tried it, tried it conscientiously and in earnest, and not for form's sake, have generally found, besides the benefit promised in Scripture to such obedience, a peculiar kind of holy sweetness accompanying their little acts of self-denial. If they really tried to give themselves for the time entirely to Christ, to rule their tempers as well as their appetites, to be kind to others as well as strict to themselves, to mean what they said in their prayers and

confessions, and to do all as secretly as possible, they really have found oftentimes a comfort and refreshment in their severities such as they were,—a comfort which they neither thought of before nor can well understand, now they find it. Neither dare they at all depend on it for the future, nor promise it to themselves or others. Their way seems to be, thankfully to take it as it comes, discerning in it an angelic message much like that which was sent to Elijah, “Arise and eat because the journey is too great for thee.”

The Sundays, for example, at this time of Lent, must come with a peculiar sort of welcome fragrance to those who have been strict with themselves on the week-days. The day of holy joy and thankfulness stands out even higher than usual among so many days of penitential sorrow.

Perhaps, too, the beautiful Spring weather, which always comes in more or less with some part or other of the forty days of Lent, may be not untruly regarded by considerate persons as a token of refreshment: an angel touching them and bidding them be of good hope that their prayers and self-denials and alms do indeed go up for a memorial before God, and are graciously received for Jesus Christ's sake, and that their Lent will lead in due time to a happy Easter.

Other times and ways of refreshment there are, more regular, and such as may without presumption be looked forward to, when people are encouraging themselves and others to set out on the journey of Christian penitence, otherwise too great for them. Thus, what a blessing it is, when you come to consider it, for those whose time is marked out by regular and very frequent returns of prayer. We know how milestones or other objects at regular distances shorten a road ; so do hours and times of prayer, carefully and devoutly kept, shorten the day, and days so spent shorten the week, and weeks the month, and months the year, and years the whole life of the penitent, which when he looked on to it seemed as if it would be a heavy and weary waste, full of strictness for which he was little prepared. Do not think that what is now recommended is a thing impossible for poor, busy, hard-working men. Those at least who know a good deal of the Psalms and Collects of the Church might easily choose out a short psalm and a short collect, which they might learn by heart and say with the Lord's Prayer, every three or four hours, without stopping their work so much as five minutes. If any man were truly touched with a sense of his sins, and wanted to exercise himself in continual devotion, this sort of exercise would be the greatest help to him ; and by dividing the time it would greatly

lessen what otherwise might be felt too much of a yoke.

The greatest of all refreshments, as well as of all helps, is the Holy Communion of our Lord's Body and Blood, called as it sometimes is, on this very account, the stay of the wayfaring man. Who can tell the greatness of the mercy which invites us so often to arise and eat this Bread, since otherwise our journey would be far too great for us ?

Bless God for these and all other His untold un-hoped-for loving-kindnesses, whereby He ever goes out to meet poor returning prodigals, and not only receives them but clothes and feeds them with His best. Bless Him for these consolations, and use them when they come, humbly and joyfully, but never forget this one thing, — that you are penitents ; you must neither depend on them beforehand, nor altogether indulge in them as comforts when they come. We are but beggars ; it becomes us not to have a choice. What God sends we must take thankfully as it comes. It will seldom be exactly what we should have fixed upon, but it will be enough to stay us and help us on our way home. Elijah had but one meal of bread and water, and it lasted him all through his Lent, till he came to the Mount of God. Our refreshments, bodily and spiritual, will be good if they will bring us nearer Christ, and not else.

"Wouldst thou glance  
Into the dark depths of a human heart  
One moment?" And Christ set me in a trance,  
Opening my eyes to see,  
While at His word the gates flew wide apart.  
I entered and essayed to advance,  
But quickly back I drew with sudden start,  
Chilled with the coldness of its vaults of sin  
And all I saw within.

There

Envy, hatred, malice, pride,  
Had each their altars ranged on every side  
To self, the selfsame idol everywhere,  
While through the cobwebbed windows light divine  
Struggled to shine.  
"Ah, Lord!" I cried,  
"Surely this heart a heathen's heart must be, —  
One who hath never heard of Thee."  
With agony I learned that it was mine.  
I fled away,  
O'erwhelmed with sorrow and despairing gloom,  
To breathe a purer air.  
But in its dismal room  
The Christ would stay!  
He shrank not even from this whited tomb, —  
And it became His temple from that day.

**O** GOD, almighty but all merciful, to whom all hearts are open, and from whom no secrets are hid, we know that no unclean thing can enter into Thy Kingdom. Our hearts are not clean, but Thou canst purify them. Our souls are sick, but Thou canst heal them. Our eyes are blind, but Thou canst

enlighten them. Too cold and lifeless have we been in spiritual things, and even in our communion with Thee, O Blessed Spirit, the Lord of Holiness and the Fountain of Life. And now, in the return of these days of our humiliation and of Thy wonderful and peculiar grace, wilt Thou receive us, renew us, and refresh us with Thy heavenly benediction and favor. Consider not our unworthiness but Thine own comfortable declaration, that Thou willest not the death of a sinner, but rather that he shall turn from his wickedness and live. Turn Thou us, O Lord, and we shall be turned. We hear and accept Thy most patient invitation, Come unto Me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you ! We renew our promises of obedience to Thy commandments and fidelity in Thy service. Send us the comfort of Thy help again. Revive Thy work, O Lord, in the midst of the years. Open Thou the windows of Heaven and pour out blessings upon all Thine heritage. Search our hearts, we beseech Thee, and leave no wicked thing in us. Deliver us from our pride, and passion, and folly, and self-love, from wrong companionships and false customs, and irreverent and uncharitable thoughts, and all the powers of darkness. And bring us on our way to the resurrection of the just in peace, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

## First Thursday.

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He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much; and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.

TRUE FAITHFULNESS KNOWS NO DISTINCTION BETWEEN GREAT AND SMALL DUTIES. From the highest point of view, that is, from God's point of view, nothing is great, nothing small, as *we* measure it. The worth and the quality of an action depend on its motive only, and not at all on its prominence, or on any other of the accidents which we are always apt to adopt as the tests of the greatness of our deeds. The largeness of the consequences of anything that we do is no measure of the true greatness or true value of it. So it is in regard to God Himself, and His doings. To Him, for His loftiness, there is nothing high; to Him, for His gentleness, there is nothing low. He as gladly stands by the sick-bed and binds up the broken-hearted, as He "tellethe the number of the stars." All that vulgar error into which we are ever falling—the measuring of the magnitude by the apparent conse-

quences of our deeds, — is the very ruin of all true strength, and of all true obedience too. In one respect nothing is great, nothing is small, except according as the reason for which I do it is lofty, because it is obedience to God; or is lowly and mean, because it is pleasure to myself. In another respect everything that a man can do is great and awful. All the beatings of that heart, all the workings of that nature, are terrible with the light of immortality. I have a soul that lives forever, and I can pour that immortal being into every deed that I do. What *can* be little to the making of which there goes the force of a soul that can know God and must abide forevermore? Nothing is small that a spirit can do. Nothing is small that can be done from a mighty motive. But even when we adopt the distinction of great and small in regard to men's actions, true fidelity must make no distinction in regard to the imperative nature of duty in the small as in the great. The least action of life can be as surely done from the loftiest motive, as the highest and the noblest. Faithfulness measures acts as God measures them. True conscientiousness deals with our duties as God deals with them. Duty is duty, conscience is conscience, right is right, and wrong is wrong, whatever sized type they be printed in. "Large" or "small" are not words for the



vocabulary of conscience. It knows only two words — right and wrong. And — just as the quality of life may be as perfect in the minutest animalculæ, of which there may be millions in a cubic inch, and generations may die in an hour — as perfect in the smallest insect as in “behemoth, biggest born of earth,” so righteousness may be as completely embodied, as perfectly set forth, as fully operative, in the tiniest action that I can do, as in the largest that an immortal spirit can be set to perform. The circle that is in a gnat’s eye is as true a circle as the one that holds within its sweep all the stars; and the sphere that a dew-drop makes is as perfect a sphere as that of the world. All duties are the same which are done from the same motive; all acts which are not so done are alike sins.

And should not this principle send us about our daily life with a cheerfulness and a power to which we are much strangers at present? Why is it that Christian people so constantly break down in the minutiae of obedience, and in the little things of their ordinary doing, but because, amongst other reasons, we have got hold of that notion that small things are less important than great ones, and that great actions need mightier motives and larger faith than the small? Oh, it irradiates all our days with lofty beauty, and it makes them all hallowed and divine,

when we feel that not the apparent greatness, not the prominence nor noise with which it is done, nor the external consequences which flow from it, but the motive from which it flowed determines the worth of our deed in God's eyes. Faithfulness is faithfulness, on whatsoever scale it be set forth !

To keep ourselves clear from the world, never to break the sweet charities that bind together the circles of our homes, to walk within our houses with perfect hearts, to be honest over the pence as well as over the pounds, never to permit the little risings of momentary anger that seem but a trifle because they pass away so quickly, to do the small duties that recur with every beat of the pendulum, and that must be done by present force and by instantly falling back upon the loftiest principle, or they cannot be done at all, — these are as noble ways of glorifying Christ and being glorified in Him, as any to which we can ever attain.

That love is purest and most true  
Which leans upon its Saviour's breast,  
And thinks with pleasure ever new  
How in all things to please Him best;  
Which in all things, not great alone,  
On serving Him is fully bent,  
And knowingly will not to one,  
No, not the smallest sin consent.

Begin, then, first with little things:

The smallest sin avoid and hate;

Obedience to love adds wings,

And little faith will grow to great.

**O** GRACIOUS GOD and most merciful Father, who hast vouchsafed us the rich and precious jewel of Thy Holy Word, convert us with Thy Spirit, that it may be written in our hearts to our everlasting comfort, to reform us, to renew us according to Thine own image, to build us up and edify us into the perfect building of Thy Christ, sanctifying and increasing in us all heavenly virtues. Grant this, O Heavenly Father, for Jesus Christ's sake. *Amen.*

## First Friday.

---

We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory as by the Spirit of the Lord.

Let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame.

"LOOKING to Jesus" is the only means of thoroughgoing, absolute self-denial. All other surrender than that which is based upon love to Him, and faith in Him, is but surface work, and drives the subtle disease to the vitals. The man that tries, by paring off an excrescence here, and giving up a bad habit there, to hammer and tinker and cut himself into the shape of a true and perfect man, may do it outwardly. He will scarcely do that, but it is possible he *may* partially. And then, what has he made himself? "A whited sepulchre:" outside, — adorned, beautiful, clean; inside, — full of rottenness and dead men's bones! The self that was beaten in the

open field of outward life, retires, like a defeated army, behind broad rivers; and concentrates itself in its fortresses, and prepares hopefully for a victorious resistance in the citadel of the heart.

Just as the old leaves drop naturally from the tree when the new buds of spring begin to put themselves out, let the new affection come and dwell in thy heart, and expel the old. "Lay aside every weight"—"looking unto Jesus." Then, too, you will find that the sacrifice and maiming of the old man has been the perfecting of *the man*. You will find that whatever you give up for Christ you get back from Christ, better, more beautiful, more blessed, hallowed to its inmost core, a joy and a possession forever. For He will not suffer that any gift laid upon His altar shall not be given back to us. So, the hand that is cut off, the eye that is plucked out, the possessions that are rendered up, the idols that are slain,—they are all given back to us again when we stand in God's own light in glory—perfect men, made after the image of Christ, and surrounded with all possessions transfigured and glorified in the light of God. "There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive manifold more in this present time and in the world to come life everlasting.

Is there a thing beneath the sun,  
That strives with Thee my heart to share?  
Oh, tear it thence and reign alone,  
The Lord of every motion there.  
Then shall my heart from earth be free,  
When it has found repose in Thee.

Oh, hide this self from me, that I  
No more but Christ in me may live  
My vile affections crucify,  
Nor let one darling lust survive.  
In all things nothing may I see,  
Nor aught desire, or seek, but Thee.

**O** GOD, whose name is ineffable, who purifiest the cavern of man's heart from vices, and makest it whiter than the snow; bestow on us Thy compassions; renew in our inward parts, we pray Thee, Thy Holy Spirit, by whom we may be able to show forth Thy praise; that being strengthened by the righteous and princely Spirit we may attain a place in the Heavenly Jerusalem, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

## First Saturday.

---

The light of the body is the eye : if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.

Spiritual things are spiritually discerned.

GOD Himself is His greatest gift. The loftiest blessing which we can receive is that we should be heirs, possessors of God.

In general terms, spiritual blessings can only be given to those who are in a certain spiritual condition. Always and necessarily the capacity or organ of reception precedes and determines the bestowment of blessings. The light falls everywhere, but only the eye drinks it in. The lower orders of creatures are shut out from all participation in the gifts which belong to the higher forms of life, simply because they are so made and organized as that these cannot find entrance into their nature. They are, as it were, walled up all round ; and the only door they have to communicate with the outer world is the door of sense. Man has higher gifts simply because he has higher capacities. All

creatures are plunged in the same boundless ocean of Divine beneficence and bestowment, and into each there flows just that, and no more, which each, by the make and constitution that God has given him, is capable of receiving. In the man there are more windows and doors knocked out than in the animal. He is capable of receiving intellectual impulses, spiritual emotions. He can think, and feel, and desire, and will, and resolve; and so he stands on a higher level than the beast below him.

Not otherwise is it in regard to God's kingdom, "which is righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." The gift and blessing of salvation is primarily a spiritual gift, and only involving outward consequences secondarily and subordinately. It mainly consists in the heart being at peace with God, in the whole soul being filled with Divine affections, in the weight and bondage of transgression being taken away, and substituted by the impulse and the life of the new love. Therefore, neither God can give, nor man can receive, that gift upon any other terms than just this: that the heart and nature be fitted and adapted for it. Spiritual blessings require a spiritual capacity for the reception of them; you cannot have the inheritance unless you are sons. If salvation consisted simply in a change of place; if it were merely that by



some expedient or arrangement an outward penalty, which was to fall or not to fall at the will of an arbitrary judge, was prevented from coming down, why then, it would be open to Him who held the power of letting the sword fall, to decide on what terms He might choose to suspend its infliction. But inasmuch as God's deliverance is not a deliverance from a mere arbitrary and outward punishment; inasmuch as God's salvation, though it be deliverance from the penalty as well as from the guilt of sin is by no means chiefly a deliverance from outward consequences, but a removal of the nature and disposition that make these outward consequences certain, — therefore a man cannot be saved, God's love cannot save him, God's justice will not save him, God's power stands back from saving him, upon any other condition than this, — that his soul shall be adapted and prepared for the reception and enjoyment of the blessing of a spiritual salvation.

There is no inheritance of Heaven without sonship; because all the blessings of that future life are of a spiritual character. The joy, and the rapture, and the glory of that higher and better life, have, of course, connected with them certain changes of bodily form, certain changes of local dwelling, certain changes which could perhaps be granted equally

to a man, of whatever sort he was. But it is not the golden harps, not the pavement of "glass mingled with fire," not the cessation from work, not the still composure and changeless indwelling, not the society even, that makes the Heaven of heaven. All these are but the embodiments and rendering visible of the inward thing, a soul at peace with God in the depths of its being, an eye which gazes upon the Father, and a heart which wraps itself in His arms. Heaven is no heaven except in so far as it is the possession of God. That saying of the Psalmist is not an exaggeration, nor even a forgetting of the other elements of future blessedness, but it is a simple statement of the literal fact of the case, "I have none in Heaven but Thee!" God is the heritage of His people. To dwell in His love, and to be filled with His light, and to walk forever in the glory of His sunlit face, to do His will, and to bear His character stamped upon our foreheads, — *that* is the glory and the perfectness to which we are aspiring.

Eye hath never seen  
On this pale earth such glory, ear hath heard  
No music like the songs which seemed to float  
Across the place. Above the city stood  
No sun, yet forth she looked, clear as the sun,  
Fair as the moon, and terrible as some

Great army. And the shining of her walls  
Was like the glory of a golden Dawn  
On stainless snow. Upon the streets there went  
And came a holy people clad in white,  
With faces sealed to peace unspeakable.  
I did not see His Face who sitteth King  
Within the Shining City, but I saw,  
Reflected on each face, His wondrous look,  
And I could read that every eye within  
The City saw Him, though I saw Him not.  
The gates were open, and the voice of them  
That sing for joy of heart was heard again within.

**O** MERCIFUL Lord Jesus Christ, Who didst redeem us  
with Thy precious Blood, have mercy upon the souls  
of Thy servants, and graciously bring them to the joyful  
dwellings of Paradise, that they may there love Thee with  
that unspeakable love which can never be separated from  
Thee and Thine elect, who livest with the Father and the  
Holy Ghost one God, world without end. *Amen.*

## First Sunday.

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Beloved, be diligent that ye may be found of Him in peace, without spot and blameless.

Grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

WHAT does growing in grace mean, but that our spiritual intention should lengthen its reach,—should extend itself more and more to every corner of our life? Some little business of routine calls my attention at a certain hour, having nothing sublime or extraordinary in it, but the neglect of which would entail discomfort and annoyance,—a visit, or a letter of courtesy, or an interview, in which a few necessary words pass, and then it is over. Well; even the most earthly of earthly actions, those which are most bound up with this transitory state of things, and which have no intrinsic dignity or sacredness whatever, may be spiritualized by importing into them a spiritual intention. The little courtesies, for example, which society requires, may be yielded simply because they *are* social requirements, in which

case they will be often done “grudgingly, and of necessity ;” or they may be regarded as so many opportunities of compliance with the inspired precept, “Be courteous” — in which case they will be done cheerfully, “as to the Lord, and not unto men.” And (generally) the meeting of all calls upon us, however humble, with the thought that they come to us in the way of God’s providence, and in the working out of the system of things which He has appointed, and are indications of the quarter in which He would have us direct our energies, is a great means of purifying our intention, and so of advancing in spirituality. For nobody is aware what is going on in our hearts, when we meet these calls in a devout spirit ; our friends only see us doing commonplace things which others do, and give us no credit. But, in so meeting such calls, we have praise of God, who, like a good Father, marks with approbation the humblest efforts of His children to please Him.

I would have gone ; God bade me stay :  
I would have worked ; God bade me rest.  
He broke my will from day to day,  
He read my yearnings unexpressed,  
And said them nay.

Now I would stay ; God bids me go :  
Now I would rest ; God bids me work.

He breaks my heart tossed to and fro,  
My soul is wrung with doubts that lurk  
And vex it so.

I go, Lord, where Thou sendest me ;  
Day after day I plod and moil :  
But Christ my God, when will it be  
That I may let alone my toil  
And rest with Thee?

**O** GOD, who for the perfecting of our faith hast set us in conflict between the flesh and the spirit, give us grace so to walk in the spirit, that we may not fulfill the lusts of the flesh. Perfect Thou us in love, that we may conquer our natural selfishness and hatred of others ; fill our hearts with Thy joy, and shed abroad in them Thy peace which passeth understanding ; that so those murmurings and disputings, to which we are by nature prone, may be overcome. Make us long-suffering and gentle, and thus subdue our hastiness and angry tempers. Give us faith, meekness, and temperance, against which there is no law. And thus crucifying the flesh with its affections and lusts, may we bring forth the blessed fruits of the Spirit to Thy praise and glory through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## First Monday.

---

He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me, and he that loveth son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me.

To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

NOTICE the habitual stress laid by Christ on His own Person as the organ of Christian influence. Nothing could be better calculated to strike the popular mind than this emphasis, laid by One who from the first preaches lowliness of heart, and predicts the shortness of His life and the ignominious violence of His end,—on Himself as the source of an enduring power, and the corner-stone of a divine kingdom. The necessity of loving Him, the perpetual fame of her who anointed Him for His burial, the grief that will be rightly felt for Him when He leaves the earth, the identification of men's duty to each other, even to "the least of these, My brethren," with their duty to Him,—all these are assumptions which run through the whole Gospel. Though His kingdom is to be the kingdom of which a little child

is the true type, the kingdom in which it is the "meek" who are blessed, in which it is the "poor in spirit" who are to be the rulers, yet this is only saying in other words that He is to be the life of it, since it is because He is "meek and lowly in heart" that those who come to Him shall find rest for their souls. Whether you choose to say that it is in spite of this humility or because of this humility, yet in either case Christ proclaims Himself as the true object of love, and the permanent centre of power throughout the kingdom He proclaims. He declares that His departure will be the first legitimate cause of mourning to His followers: "Can the children of the bride-chamber mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them, but the days will come when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast." The love of Him is to predominate over all other love. "He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me, and he that loveth son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me." Exclusion from His presence is everywhere treated as that outer darkness, where there are weeping and gnashing of teeth. His vision of the spiritual future of untrue men is of men crying to Him, "Lord, Lord!" and entreating Him to recognize them, to whom He will be compelled to reply, "I never knew you; depart from Me, ye that



work iniquity." He justifies with warmth all honor paid to Him personally: "The poor ye have always with you, but Me ye have not always;" "Verily, I say unto you, wherever this Gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, which this woman have done, be told for a memorial of her." And now consider what usually comes of self-assertion much less astounding than this in a human being, and what actually came of it in our Lord's case. The greatest of the world's teachers make light of themselves. Socrates treats his own death as of no moment. The Jewish prophets never think of treating their own careers as of any significance, apart from the message they deliver. And as a rule in the world, when a man magnifies himself with gentleness and simplicity, we smile; we may find him lovable, but there is always a little laughter mingled with our love. When he does it arrogantly or imperiously, we are revolted. In either case, the first generation which does not personally know him puts aside his pretensions as irrelevant, if not even fatal to his greatness. But how was it with Christ? The first great follower who had never known Him in the flesh, St. Paul, takes up this very note as the keynote of the new world. To him, "to live is Christ, to die is gain." His heart is "hid with Christ in God." His cry is, "not I, but Christ that worketh

in me." He makes his whole religious philosophy turn on the teaching of our Lord that He is the Vine, and His disciples the branches. In the land of the olive St. Paul adapts the image to the husbandry of the olive. Again, Christ is the head, and men are the members. And what is true of St. Paul is true of all those in whom the Christian faith has shown its highest genius in subsequent ages. These sayings of Christ as to being Himself the centre of human affections and the light of human lives, instead of repelling men, interpret their own highest experience, and seem but the voice of an interior truth and the assurance of an imperishable joy.

I feel that I may love Thee as the Babe  
Of Bethlehem's manger, as the wondrous Boy  
Among the temple-doctors, strangely brave:  
As He who gave  
The wine mysterious: with the morning's joy  
In fisher-boats upon Tiberias' sea,  
Or with Samaria's daughter at the well;  
Feeding the multitudes who followed Thee;  
Or patiently  
Teaching high truths in glowing parable.  
Oh, for a glance of thy kind human face !  
Then might I love Thee as I long to do.  
If its pure lineaments I could but trace  
One moment's space,  
Would not my bowed affection prove more true?  
Would I not press, like Mary, to thy feet,

Who poured the perfumed oil with reverend touch?

And hear, perchance, Thy gracious lips repeat,

In accents sweet,

“Her sins are pardoned, for she loveth much.”

She loveth much, O wondering heart of mine!

When shall this blest assurance be thine own?

Saviour, Redeemer, human yet Divine,

Each throb be thine

And for my lack may Thy great love atone!

**I** ADORE, I praise and glorify Thee, and I give thanks to Thee, O Son of the living God, most gracious Jesus, that Thou didst preach the kingdom of heaven, heal the sick, raise the dead, and do many wonderful works; graciously conversedst with men, and most mercifully comfortedst them; and for thirty-three years didst endure for my sake many labors, sorrows, persecutions, with a most meek and lowly heart; that Thou mightest teach me most fully by precept and example, to live justly and holily. O gracious Saviour, remember, I beseech Thee, of Thy love and goodness, remember my great misery, and have mercy upon me; sanctify me wholly; give me full pardon of my sins, and renew a right spirit within me; grant that I may imitate Thy humility, resignation, patience, charity, and all Thy virtues, that I may be well pleasing to Thee. And may Thy holy name be blessed throughout all ages. *Amen.*

## First Tuesday.

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Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.

The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

SINCE we are, one and all, in the number of those to whom God has said, "Arise, shine, for thy light has come," let us take care that we *do* shine; that we keep our souls, like a clear mirror, free from the mists and stains of earth, which would otherwise dim the glorious image of the Son of God, offering Himself to be reflected in them continually. When angels look down on the regenerate soul, they expect to see it all bright and shining with a purity something like their own; disregarding what might kindle evil desire, and turning itself night and day, towards God, with reverential love. They expect to see it also shining with cheerfulness; enlightened evermore with a holy and religious joy; a joy in God, like that of the Blessed Virgin Mother, when

she knelt beside the manger, earnestly beholding and adoring her new-born Babe. Also we may believe that the holy angels, who waited near Bethlehem on the first Christmas Day, and were so ready and eager with their songs of praise, and in instructing the shepherds where they might find the Babe,— we may well believe that these angels expect to find in us, the new-born of Christ, a certain obedient and dutiful alacrity, a quick and bright way of going on from one thing to another, earnestly seeking out and fulfilling all His will. And this may be part of the meaning of the Holy Spirit, when He says to each of us by the Prophet, “Arise, shine,” as who should ask, “Are you not a Christian? be not then slothful and languid; arouse yourself; be up and doing in your Lord’s service; and when you have done a little, some one or two things, do not stand gazing on it, but go on to the next thing; stir thyself up continually, by devout and thankful meditation, to do more and more for Christ; this is the way to arise and shine in good earnest.” Do your work swiftly and clearly, but as silently as possible: after the manner of rays of light, which come from the sun in silence, with inconceivable speed, straight to the point where God intends them to fall. Such should our work be; no noise, no disturbance, no loitering about other and meaner things.

Let every faithful heart rejoice,  
Lift up its hands to God on high,  
And with its life and look and voice  
Tell out His praises worthily !

Into this dark world Jesus came  
That all eyes might his form behold,  
While from the limits of its frame  
He passed, — that we might be consoled.

To all He showed that gentle Face ;  
On good and bad alike it shone ;  
Its radiant loveliness and grace  
The Lord of all concealed from none.

O love of Christ beyond all love !  
O Clemency beyond all thought !  
O grace all praise of men above  
Whereby such gifts to men are brought !

O Blessed Face, whose light we sing,  
Here on our way we worship Thee,  
That in the Country of our King  
Filled with Thy glory we may be !

**J**ESUS, our Master, do Thou meet us while we walk in the way and long to reach Thy Country ; so that following Thy light we may keep the way of righteousness, and never wander away into the horrible darkness of this world's night, while Thou, Who art the Way, the Truth, and the Life, art shining within us. *Amen.*

## Second Wednesday.

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Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, that Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.

God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty.

TESTIMONY meets us in all parts of the Gospel to the early and deliberately announced intention of Christ to found an enduring kingdom, on materials which were not of the stuff of which earthly Governments are made; the Moulder of which did not contemplate, indeed, steadily refused to contemplate, conquering within any assigned period the help of earthly Governments for his purpose, or making any alliance of that kind an essential condition of the kingdom which He proclaimed. The Jewish polity was a spiritual polity, but it rested on an organization which wielded all the recognized powers of the State. Christ rejected the idea of directly availing Himself of these means, and declared His

purpose to use means so unpromising that, in the human sense, they were hardly means to such an end at all. We never hear without the thrill of a new surprise that calm, strange, and unique prophecy, addressed at the very outset of His short career to a dozen peasants, "Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom," when we remember that a kingdom has really been given to them, though not a kingdom of this world. "Follow Me," He said to one or two couples of fishermen, as they cast their nets into the waters, and mended them on the shores of the Lake of Galilee, "and I will make you fishers of men." And they were made fishers of men, and obviously made so solely by Him Who thus chose them from a calling apparently so little qualified to fit them for the hopeless task. It is remarkable enough that by far the greatest of the Apostles, — he in whom even high human insight might have discerned the elements of marvelous force and moral influence, — was not chosen for his work during Christ's earthly life. The "little flock" to whom our Lord announces so early and so peremptorily that they are "not to fear," because it is their "Father's good pleasure to give them the kingdom," are such a "little flock" as no one before ever proposed to make the founders of a new world. Indeed, Christ asserts repeatedly that they



are chosen because they are not "wise and prudent," because they are "babes," and no doubt because on that very account they are not likely to aim at the construction of an ambitious polity; because they have no sort of influence which would give them authority, even in the little world of Judæa. They are anxiously warned against any sort of striving to acquire earthly dignity. Wealth is even forbidden them. They are promised "the kingdom" in the same breath in which they are told to sell what they have, and provide for themselves bags which wax not old, "a treasure in the heavens which faileth not," in order that "where their treasure is, there may their hearts be also." Moreover, while the Apostles are forbidden all the ordinary means of binding together a great earthly organization, they are told that they are to be for a long time few and scattered sowers of division, preachers to people who could not or would not understand. "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few." The kingdom is not to be a popular one, in that time at least. Their Master speaks to the multitude in parables, because to the few chosen it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the many it is not given. Yet the chosen Apostles themselves misunderstand and misinterpret their Master. Peter, after being told that his confession is the rock on

which the Church should be built, is spoken of as a tempter and an offense to his Master, as one who savors not of the things which are of God, but those which are of men. John is twice rebuked, once for his revengeful spirit, once for his short-sighted ambition. Judas's treachery is predicted. All the twelve are warned that they will fail at the hour of Christ's trial. In a word, from beginning to end of the Gospels we have evidence which no one could have managed to forge, that Christ deliberately chose materials of which it would have been impossible for any one to build a great organization, unless he could otherwise provide, and continue to provide, the *power* by which that organization was to stand. Who can hear the words, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes," without being consciously or unconsciously impressed with the divine confidence of the purpose which selected what we should have thought the least promising of all materials for the most majestic and enduring of works, and prove their fitness by the history of the ages? Now, the popular belief in Christianity has much more to do with the vivid impression made by these reiterated and emphatic assertions, ingrained into the very essence of the Gospel, of our Lord's intention to establish a

kingdom out of elements thus humanly hopeless, — than with any learned evidences. Would it not be something incredible that a mere man should profess his intention to establish a kingdom which shall endure forever, by the help of twelve ignorant men, who will not even keep him with them for more than a year or two, who habitually misunderstand his words and mistake his spirit, and who are told that they are destined almost involuntarily to drink of his cup and be baptized with his baptism, in spite of misreading the sort of destiny which that implies, and the kind of glory to which it leads, — and then that his mere prophetic guess should be so far fulfilled as the history of Christianity has fulfilled Christ's prediction at this day? Is there not here a vision of what would be to man an impossible future, on the partial realization of which the popular mind is far better able to pass a trustworthy judgment than is even the most learned mind to pass judgment on the intricate details of biographic or historic evidence? Or consider only what is implied in the words of the Last Supper. Christ announces, what must then have been to the most judicial of human minds nothing but conjecture, that He was then and there to give up His life for the world. This could not have taken place without His condemnation by the Roman ruler, against whose rule He had been

guilty of no offense. At that time, it can scarcely have seemed even probable to a sober-minded Jew, that the anger of the Jewish priesthood should bring about such a result at all, much less immediately. But Christ takes it so absolutely for granted, that He speaks of the bread and wine as symbols of His broken Body and poured-out Blood, and founds upon the similitude a New Testament, which He declares to be for the remission of the sins of many. And not only does His death at once follow as He predicts, but the bread and wine become in some sense or other His body and blood to future centuries : —

Both faith and art have given  
To that one hour, a life of endless rest,  
And still, whoe'er would taste the food of heaven,  
May to that table come a welcome guest.

Words which, coming at such a time from the mouth of an ordinary man would have sounded like a melancholy conjecture and a tender metaphor, prove to have been in Christ's mouth the solid foundation of history and the corner-stone of a lasting faith. Now, surely, the popular impression of these facts as implying that our Lord's knowledge had its roots planted in the very well-springs of the world's history is, to say the least, infinitely better justified by reason than any inference, however judicial, from the careful survey of minute historic evidences possibly could be.

The materials of the building are not only intrinsically frail, but it is the Builder Himself who selects them because they are so, and Who yet calmly announces that the building shall outlast the heavens. His own death is to be the signal of defection and despair to His followers, yet it is to be the firm foundation of an eternal structure ; and, as a matter of fact, no sooner is His visible hand withdrawn than the living stones run from all quarters of the earth, and pile themselves into the temple of the ages. Is there not a real solidity in the conviction of divine power which these evidences produce ?

Where the far-stretching nave and glorious choir  
With stately transepts — intersecting — blend,  
And form a mighty Cross, I see ascend,  
As with a leap to heaven, the tapering spire.  
It bids me lift my looks and longings higher  
Than this world's smoke and clouds, to let them tend  
To yonder azure Home and gracious Friend,  
And set on things above my heart's desire.  
So, resting on the Cross as on its base,  
See the fair fabric of religion rise —  
Truth her foundation and her topstone Grace.  
Thus, ever upwards see her point men's eyes,  
Which some celestial ladder seem to trace ;  
Its foot on earth, its summit in the skies.

**O** GOD, who hast taught us that in Thy mysterious Providence suffering must lead to glory : who hast placed the

Cross before the Crown, and hast made much tribulation the entrance to Thy heavenly kingdom : may we learn from this Thy will, to wait for our deliverance from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of Thy children. Hasten, O Lord, the day when the sons of God shall be manifested, and disappointment and decay and sin shall be no more. Prepare the way of Thy coming, O Thou who art the desire of all creation and the delight of the sons of men. Set up Thy sign in the heavens, and gather thine elect from the ends of the earth. Show us thy glory, and change us into Thy perfect image. And thus reveal unto us the treasures which Thou hast prepared for them that love Thee, where Thou livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Spirit, world without end. *Amen.*

## Second Thursday.

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And there were certain Greeks among them, that came up to worship at the Feast. The same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus.

And in that day the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness.

We shall see Him as He is.

ONE disciple writes to another, "I am tired and discouraged, and want some one to speak or write to me about Christ and his love for us all." Some of us, hearing these simple words, will say, "How natural that is! I have felt it myself,—that weariness and discouragement; I too have had a dim yet deep impression that belief and comfort could come to me only from the Saviour of mankind; and so I have longed to have some stronger soul, who had a clearer experience and brighter visions of his love than mine, tell me of it; tell me of its power; tell me of its beauty; tell me of its freeness, its abundance, its patience, its sweet and satisfying thoughts."

It must have been this feeling, in some of its different degrees, that brought many of his first followers to Jesus. John the Baptist who had borne the solitude and pain of his great prophetic calling, who was "tired" of the hollowness of courts and the frivolities of the people, and "discouraged" at the slow advances of the latter day; St. Matthew, from the market-place; Simon and John, from their nets and boats, on the Lake of Galilee; Andrew and Philip, along the banks of the Jordan; Nathanael, from under the fig-tree; the Centurion, from the sick-bed of his servant, and the Syrophenician woman from that of her child; the cultured Greeks that came to worship at the Feast; the woman of Samaria in the midday heat, by the well; the woman that all the city knew for a sinner, uninvited, pressing through the formidable barrier of the Pharisee's door, with her loosened hair and the alabaster box in her hand, — with one or another shade of weariness or discouragement, with guilty consciences, or homesick hearts, or unsatisfied desires, or bereavement, or unsuccessful attempts to lead a right moral life of themselves. Prodigals in appetite or intellect or self-will, they all wanted to know Christ and his love. Something told them He could comfort them. So it has been with all the innumerable souls ever since, in all the generations and



lands of the world, who have arisen from their separate places and have been formed into the mighty company of the faithful; in some sense or other, they were unsatisfied, empty-hearted, "discouraged" with themselves, before they began to long and listen for the love that Jesus only could give. They did not come with some predetermined theory of life or of religion and demand that the word of Heaven should be set square to that; they did not lay down their Grecian philosophy, their scientific conclusions, their Pantheistic or Platonic speculations, or even their system of natural laws, and ask that the way of salvation should be conformed to that. They never would have faith that way if they had. For lo! here was the Son of God. The peace they wanted was that which passeth all their understanding. Their intellectual conceit and self-confidence was the very illusion they were "tired" of, and they had first to become like little children with new hearts, believing and praying to enter into the kingdom.

But others, if the same thing were said to them, "I am tired and discouraged, and want to see and to know Christ," would wonder at it. Some secret link is wanting to connect their feeling with that confession. These are the same persons who, when we say our general confession, do not feel it to be

their confession, and do not say it with their heart of hearts, — that they are “lost sheep,” and have become so by following their “own devices and desires;” that there is “no health” in them; and that they are “miserable offenders.” “Tired” they are not; for the energies of both body and mind are still full of vigor; “discouraged” they are not; for money, luxury, social position, admiration, the fashionable world, still seem worth pursuing, and the pursuit is keen and fascinating, as of those who run for a visible prize, in a bracing air. They do not want to be told of Christ, or to “see Jesus,” because they have no reason to believe He would help them to their darling objects; and these, for the present, are enough.

Of this superficial satisfaction it is enough to say now that being dependent on the frailest of conditions, it never lasts long; that any one of a thousand common changes upsets and scatters it; that when it is thus dispersed the wretchedness which it leaves behind is the saddest in the world; and that even while it continues it is never associated with the nobler traits of human character, and never wins the profound respect even of the world itself in which it eats, drinks, and is merry.

And hence, the untiring and unceasing work of God’s compassion on earth is to bring human hearts

over, from the one of these classes to the other : out of unconcern to the hearty longing for Christ, — for his love, his grace, his life. It is to stir and awaken that desire, which never is despised if it is sincere, and never disappointed if it is persevering. For this the Holy Spirit keeps up his inward and invisible solicitation, speaking through the conscience. For this the Providential plan of each individual life is shaped and carried on, with its daily discipline. For this the Prophets rebuke, the Apostles teach, the Martyrs die. For this the Scriptures are written, the Gospel is preached, the Church is planted and extended, the Sacraments are ministered, the Prayers are offered. For this, — all ye whose groans are relieved or smothered, — whose tears fall or are forced back upon their fountains in fear or shame, — whose houses are desolate, whose springs of joy are dry as summer-dust, whose career is a failure, and whose ambition is dead, — *for this* you are “tired and discouraged,” scourged and lonely, — that you might “want” some voice to “speak to you about Christ and his love :” nay, that you might want to see Jesus himself. Blessed are they in whom the sorrow is not comfortless, but for whom it is only the cruciform tree which yieldeth the peaceable fruit !

Coming to that “valley of Achor,” and finding

it to be thus "a door of hope," your heart will stand just where the disciple mentioned at the outset stood, with a peculiar mixture of two contending feelings: "tired" with unsatisfactory attempts and "discouraged" with standards of duty not overtaken but flying a long distance before, — and yet, in the midst of this unrest, having a deep trust within, the foreshining of an immortal hope, that Christ and his love are realities after all which *may be found*. Somewhere, they can be found. Some tongue can tell about them. "Tell me, oh Thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon."

There is a secret conviction that all help and light and consolation can come only from the Saviour; yet there is a yearning for some outward assistance in reaching Him. There is uneasiness, yet an interior prophecy of the Lamb of God who can satisfy it. There is a kind of faith in the Cross and the Crucified; yet there is a gulf of separation needing to be bridged before the precious redemption can fill the soul with peace. In a word, Christ, the Sacrifice, is felt to be the only living "Way," and yet there seems to be needed a way first unto that "Way."

So I have heard a careful and enterprising man of business, accustomed to exact and practical habits,

being struck down with disease, laid aside from all his eager plannings, after clearly acknowledging his mistake, and bitterly lamenting that neglect of many opportunities which had wasted two score years that belonged to his Master, to go on and say: "What I want now is to see, to feel, to realize Christ; I want Him made very real to me; I want to be conscious of his presence, and sure of his hand. This is all that is wanting. I am heartily sorry for these my misdoings, and I repent of them. I trust my unworthy offering is accepted, and my pardon sealed. I am sure I mean to glorify God in the little remnant of a life that is left me. But I want, chiefly and unspeakably, to see and feel Jesus Christ with me."

That will come, according to the promise, — "I and my Father will come to him, — if any man open the door." The reason it comes slowly is, that long courses of habit have turned the eyes another way, and dulled their vision. They are now, thank God, touched and anointed by the Heavenly Hand which giveth light; but at first they only "see men as trees walking," and not the Son of man himself, preëminent in power and glory, and near at hand. This new disciple must walk some way out from the Jerusalem of his conversion to the Emmaus where there is the breaking of bread, before he thoroughly

*beholds* the Saviour, "as with open face." There have been many negligences; in prayer, in obedience, in all the holy discipline and pious acts of character and ordinance. Perhaps even yet the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is not approached; or some other enjoined means of closer union with Christ is not faithfully used. The way, then, to this nearer, fuller, and more completely satisfying fellowship and oneness with the Master is the way Christ has opened in His Church; it is by the altar of sacrifice; it is, while leaving no moral commandment unlearned, to throw open all the windows of the soul for the breath and sunlight of the Spirit; to let faith be free and unhindered; to take up whatever cross lies in the path; to wait patiently and thankfully on Him who never forgets: — thankfully for what is already given, — patiently, as the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, through the *latter* as well as the early rain.

The way, therefore, to the clearer and more comforting vision of the Lord's face is threefold. Detach the heart from every distracting object. Keep it open, watching, waiting, looking for Him. And, while there is any strength for charitable work, arise straightway and do it, in His name.

We would see Jesus! we have longed to see Him  
Since first the story of His love was told;  
We would that He might sojourn now among us,  
As once He sojourned with the Jews of old.

We would behold Him, as He wandered lowly,  
No room for Him, too often, in the inn;  
Behold that life, the beautiful, the holy,  
And only sinless in this world of sin.

We would see Jesus! we would have Him with us,  
A guest beloved, and honored at our board;  
How blessed were our bread if it were broken  
Before the sacred presence of our Lord.

We would see Jesus! we would have Him with us,  
Friend of our households and our children dear,  
Who still, should death or sorrow come among us,  
Would hasten to us, and would touch the bier.

We would see Jesus not alone in sorrow,  
But we would have Him with us in our mirth;  
He, at whose right hand there are joys forever,  
Doth not disdain to bless the joys of earth.

We would see Jesus! but the wish is faithless;  
Thou still art with us, who hast loved us well;  
Thy blessed promise, "I am with you always,"  
Is ever faithful, O Immanuel.

**O** HOLY and most merciful Lord, the light of the world,  
who didst open the eyes of the blind when they prayed  
unto Thee, giving them sight, bid Thou our darkness flee away,

remove the dimness from our vision of Thee and of Thy heavenly things, correct the wanderings of our desires, and lead us so safely through the dangerous places of this world that finally we may behold Thy Face in glory. Grant this, O Thou who livest with the Father and the Holy Ghost world without end. *Amen.*



## Second Friday.

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And looking up to heaven He sighed and said, Ephphatha, that is, Be opened !

When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping, which came with her, He groaned in the spirit and was troubled, and said, Where have ye laid him? They said unto Him, Lord, come and see. Jesus wept. Then said the Jews, Behold, how He loved him !

OUR Lord was on the eve of healing a poor sufferer disabled in two of his bodily faculties. "They bring unto Him one that was deaf and had an impediment in his speech, and they beseech Him to put His hand upon them." Christ knew His own power. Why did He *sigh*? In a few moments, this imprisoned mind will be rejoicing in the full restoration and liberty of its action. And certainly there was no occasion for sadness in the faith of the friends who brought the man to the Healer's feet. For nothing in all the offices of friendship is more precious to Him than its intercessions. At the same instant, too, that He *sighed* He was looking up to

Heaven, to the Father with whom His communion was perfect. Why, then, should He sigh? Or, just as He was to give back Lazarus to life, why should He weep?

There can be but one answer. In all common sights Christ saw more than our common eyes can see. To Him *everything*, whether in nature or in man, in lilies or in sparrows, in a poor widow's mites of charity, in cups of cold water, in seed-grain, and fishing-nets, and pieces of money, — *everything* was set into divine connections and bore some spiritual meaning. To a religious eyesight every place is filled with God, and stands related to a divine purpose. So looking on this sad victim of disorder, or on the tomb at Bethany, Jesus is reminded of all the load of miseries and maladies in our suffering Race. His thought passes from the one case of wretchedness before Him to the vast accumulations of physical sickness and anguish, which sometimes make the earth itself look like a hospital, to the procession of pale and aching sufferers as they lengthen down the ages. It would have been so with Him if he had been visibly, as he certainly has been actually, present, with the circles of mourners here when we buried our dead or watched by the sick. Would not His searching thought go behind all this mortal discord, and penetrate the moral sources of

it? He sees that, back in its deep root and secret origin, not only death but disease comes by sin; that as sure as there is agony, God's good law must somewhere have been broken. "The sting of death is sin." To be sure, we cannot, in individual cases, trace out the exact line of causation and effect: we should only commit cruel blunders if we tried to connect every instance of suffering with direct and personal transgression: yet none the less true it is,—as the Gospel, from Genesis, and even on to the great anthems of redemption in the Apocalypse of St. John, assures us, that outward distress is only the shudder of humanity rent asunder from God's blessed will, and struggling under the violation of His ordinances of mercy. It is the inarticulate wail of sin. We are not isolated individuals in this world, each having only his own separate path through it, but we are bound together; we ache with each other's infirmities, and with hereditary maladies; we all bear vicarious sufferings. In the groan of every ailing body the Saviour heard an echo of the retributive lamentation of the whole groaning and travailing creation in its pain, crying out for His Cross, and waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God. What wonder if He sighed with it? All this suffering, these stripes, He must take up, in the wonderful capacity and fullness of His re-

onciling work, into His loving and glorious person. More than once, these premonitions of the Garden and Calvary fell upon Him ; as He came to the burial-place at Bethany,—as He was on the eve of working those very miracles where His perfect mastery over every kind of evil seemed to be proved,—He was sad at heart, He sighed, and He wept. Can there be any human heart among us that, seeing this, does not feel some motion of gratitude and trust towards Him ?

Again, this expression of His sadness shows how perfectly Christ was man. Beholding only the displays of his miracle-working Omnipotence, seeing the winds and the sea, the sick and the dead, obey Him, vigorous life flushing again through the paleness and stiffness of death just as light and motion did through the universe on the morning of the first creation, we might fix our attention only on His supernatural majesty, and so lose the tender sense of His human oneness with ourselves. But the sound of this sigh,—such as only a human breast could heave,—the sight of tears such as only a nature fashioned in all points like our own could shed,—this brings Him to our side. We look into those moistened eyes, and believe Him. We lean on that sighing breast, and are at peace with Him. We know that He was tempted in all points like as we

are, that He might succor us when we are tempted. Though the awful authority of Heaven and Earth is in His hand, there is compassion in His heart. We have not an High Priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities. We know in whom we have believed, and that being made like unto ourselves He is not ashamed to call us brethren.

We are brought, then, to the import of this incident to ourselves. First, it discovers to us the true character of Christian sympathy, as being something far beyond a mere soft and sentimental instinct of nature. Half the time sympathy is sought, and is given, only as a superficial luxury of weak natures; only as a timid escape from God's strong and saving discipline. But in the Son of God perfect tenderness is balanced with the highest power. This is the complete manliness of Jesus. The Church has no need of Mariolatry; for in her Divine Lord she presents us all the gentleness and pity of woman. Still less than she wants virgin-worship does she want a heathen hero-worship; for courage, magnanimity, calm endurance, patient sacrifice of self,—all the possible elements of heroic greatness have also their manifestation and harmony in Him. Hence His object is not so much to confer a little transient, shallow comfort on our uneasy nerves or limbs,

as to accomplish the deep and inward cure which sets us in lasting reconciliation with God, takes sin away, and brings the peace that the world can never give. "Be healed of thy passion, thy selfishness, thy wicked will," He seems to say, "and then no matter for this temporary aching of the flesh." Even His miracles of bodily blessing are only symbols of His redeeming truth and spirit, cleansing and quickening the soul. What we really want of the fellow-feeling of our friends is not only that it should come down to the level where we are, and palliate the pain; but that it should strengthen us for a holier submission, and so nerve us and lift us on for a nobler life in the future.

Again, this brief glimpse of the text into the soul of the Master shows us the Christian ministry of sorrow. We need not be ashamed either of the feeling or of the natural exercise of it. That is a false ambition, not true manhood. Our Gospel is kinder, as well as profounder, than Paganism. Jesus sighs, and thereby the sighing soul of mankind is invigorated. He comes, groaning in spirit, to Lazarus's grave, and we are sure that God Almighty is a God All-True and merciful. He sheds a patriot's tears over His nation and its superb Jerusalem, and we learn from it the glorious truth that our religion embraces every genial emotion and genuine interest of

man, so that a country's terrible anguish for her law and her liberty is justified, and the loyalty of her sons and daughters is acceptable to God.

Here are two kinds of happiness. One is on the surface. It comes of a favorable temperament, of gratified desires, of uniform prosperity. It is easily unsettled. Few have it unmixed. Fewer still keep it. The other is a happiness attained through discipline, born in some conflict, the fruit of suffering, staying by till the shadows flee forever away. This is what gives some persons spiritual influence and ascendancy over others. We never value those people very much as our comforters who have never known what it was to bear pain, and to sit in dark places themselves. It is because Christ was alone with the Tempter in the wilderness, that He helps us every day, where the Tempter is trying to make a wilderness of our life. It is because He proceeds instantly from sighing for the sick man to acting for him, that we know sympathy is not meant to waste itself in mere feeling, but to stimulate our active energies for useful service. It is because He sighs, even while He looks up to heaven, because His soul is sorrowful and exceeding heavy, even unto death, amidst the triumphs of the Garden, with the angel strengthening Him, that we find no inconsistency between a healthy and resigned sorrow here and

that faith in God which is still the victory that overcometh the world.

Give no place to that irreligious sorrow which does not look up to heaven, but only sighs on earth. Grief has two comforters, two angels that sit in the empty tomb; the prayer of faith, and work, for suffering men.

But, give just as little place to an unsympathizing religion. If the other is the world separating itself from faith, this is faith separating itself from the world. Selfishness will never sit at the Master's feet by hiding itself in chambers, or flying to the desert. He will have, at the great love-feast of His Church, not fastidious disciples, not dainty hands, not dreamy devotees, making a fancy of their worship or their creed, but such resolute, self-denying, and holy souls as are ready to follow Him steadfastly whithersoever He goeth. All sorrow, all faith, all work are reconciled in Him. For He sighs, he looks up to heaven, and then He opens the ears of the deaf, and loosens their tongues, for His praise. He weeps, and then exclaims, "Lazarus, come forth," to live and work once more. Nay, He groans in the Garden, and cries out at the cross; and thus He passes to open the doors of the grave and the gates of the resurrection morning, for all that believe and live and labor in Him.



The deaf may hear the Saviour's voice;  
The fettered tongue its chain may break;  
But the deaf heart, the dumb by choice,  
The sluggard soul that will not wake,  
The guilt that scorns to be forgiven, —  
These baffle even the cures of heaven !

**O** LORD Almighty, we beseech Thee to have mercy upon us Thy servants, whose souls are too like unto them that lie in the grave. Open our eyes to behold Thy wonders. Open our ears to hear Thy Word. Loosen our tongues that we may bear faithful witness for Thee in the face of a foolish and vain world, and evermore lift up our prayers and praises unto Thee. Raise us up from the death of sin unto the life of righteousness. *Amen.*

## Second Saturday.

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Wash you, make you clean ; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes ; cease to do evil ; learn to do well ; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.

Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more.

But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.

Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day ; we are not of the night, nor of darkness.

Therefore let us not sleep, as do others ; but let us watch and be sober.

It is an inadequate conception of the Christian life to suppose it to be the mere quickening of the emotional part of our nature, or the stirring up of our imaginations. We may drive one part of our nature faster than another part can follow. There are some of dull sensibility to whom the discipline is eminently salutary of quickening the emotions. Those, too, who are engaged in busy and active life,

may employ the same discipline with the greatest advantage; but there may be others for whom there is a danger of raising the emotional part to God, and leaving the rest behind. Do we not hear it said by the world that a religious man is not always a better man; that a man who calls himself religious is not in his dealings always the most straightforward, the most honest and fair, the most incapable of taking advantage in a bargain, the most truthful in his words, the most charitable in his thoughts of others, the most watchful to repress every unkind act, the most self-denying and careful to repress all self-indulgence? Is there no truth in this which the world sometimes says? Is it not the experience of any chaplain, that he cannot trust those men who seem most impressed by his speaking, and who are ready to express, in ardent words, their sense of the benefit they derive from him? Do not those of us who come in contact with a young man who has fallen astray, sometimes feel a morbid horror of cant, if we hear him expressing too eloquently his repentance and his desire to improve? Not that we of necessity suppose him to be consciously insincere; but we know how often feeling dies away without ever becoming a practical spring of action. We may take a lesson from our Lord Himself. Is it not remarkable how large a space of His discourses was occupied in re-

proving the religious world? It was the Pharisees who, in an age of unbelief, when even the future life was denied, and the existence of angels and spirits disputed, set their hearts on the unseen, and delighted to make long prayers. What we must do if we would deepen the divine life within us, is constantly to set Christ before us, and refer to Him in everything we do. Do we not feel, when we have an honored guest in our house, that we desire to suppress everything unseemly, and put ourselves, so to speak, on our best behavior? And when are we on our worst behavior? When there is no one, no one but God, to watch what we are doing. Do we really live as in the sight of God? To live in His presence is indeed an immense comfort in time of trouble. We turn to Him in time of danger, but if we turn to Him only then, is that really living the life that realizes the presence of God? Those speculative difficulties, which have been raised as to the answer to prayer, are difficulties for which men who call themselves religious are often responsible. The priests of former days professed to be able to teach those who employed their services how by prayer they could gain for themselves the good things of this life. And now that men of science declare that they are able to teach better ways of gaining this end, prayer is put forward as a means of gaining the good things of

another life. But if prayer is supposed to have no nobler end, we must expect men to raise questions as to its efficacy. Is the hungering and thirsting after righteousness, of which the Bible speaks, to hunger and thirst merely after the rewards of righteousness? What should we think, if we could go to another planet and hear a teacher enforcing the duty of eating and drinking, and informing the people how the tissues of the body are wasted by work? Should we not say that the men, for whom all this was necessary, had no conception of what hunger or thirst was? If we try to bring Christ before us, and live close to Him, we shall feel how far we are from being like Him, and we shall feel a longing hunger to be more like Him. To realize the Incarnation is the necessary antidote to the skepticism of physical science, which impresses us with the pitilessness of physical force, and almost renders us incapable of conceiving God as a God of love, unless we know Him as manifest in the flesh. Remember, then, that every time the thought of Christ puts from us one temptation, every time an impure thought is suppressed by the thought of His purity, every time an unkind word or angry speech is checked by the thought of His meekness, every time some self-indulgence is put aside by the thought of His self-denial, the very life of God gains depth and power in our souls.

The cloud which nearest to the moon doth lie  
Shineth the brightest in the midnight sky;  
The pathway of that Christian is most bright  
Which cleaveth closest unto Christ the Light.

**O** HEAVENLY Father, who art the God of all power and all peace, give us a perfect command over all our passions and affections, that they being subject to our will, and our will to Thine, we may never fall into any violent transports or vain delusions, but that we may possess our souls in steadfastness of faith, and a heavenly tranquillity, with evenness of temper and sobriety of mind, and that weeping we may be as though we wept not, and rejoicing as though we rejoiced not, because our lives are hid with Christ in God ; unto whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost be all praise and adoration, world without end. *Amen.*

## Second Sunday.

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Out of the depths have I cried unto Thee, O Lord. Lord, hear my voice : let Thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications.

If Thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?

But there is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared.

It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

WHAT is the perfection of the spiritual life? It may be summed up in one definition, namely, that it consists in a holy likeness to our Lord and Saviour. If we approach His character, we approach the perfection of the spiritual life, and it is just in proportion as we have the mind of Christ that we have any real spirituality in our life. Now the question is, how this likeness is to be promoted. In the first place, there must be an acquaintance with God's character. God's Word, which reveals it, must not be read cursorily or idly, and in the midst of other

engagements, or when the wearied brain is worn out at night. God's Word must be deeply studied, and prayed over, and passage compared with passage, if we would become familiarized with the character of the Lord. But we may go a step farther, and say that out of the knowledge we obtain from God's Word there should arise a personal intimacy and acquaintance with the Saviour. It is a very easy thing to know about Him; but a very different one to know Him. We want to know Him in personal intercourse, to walk with Him, to converse with Him, to cultivate an intimacy with Him, to be able to go again and again to Him with the words of the Psalmist, "Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation." And now another point; in seeking His likeness, in cultivating His friendship, in making ourselves acquainted with His mind, there is one great principle to be observed, a principle which has brought life, peace, and happiness to thousands of souls: it is that we must observe the order of God's gifts. The natural heart when first awakened invariably places the spirituality first, and the forgiveness and acceptance second. Most men, when they first begin to think, would be naturally disposed, had they been intrusted with the composition of the 130th Psalm, to have written, "There is forgiveness with Thee, if I can but fear Thee better." But mark how God puts it, "There is



forgiveness with Thee that Thou mayest be feared." The whole of that holy fear, the whole of that spirituality, the whole of that reverential obedience to our blessed Lord, is the result of the forgiveness freely granted ; granted because, as we find in the seventh verse of that same Psalm, " With Thee is plenteous redemption." Now, if this order be observed, it follows that the sense of defect does not keep us at a distance from God ; but being reconciled, and being forgiven, we may go close to the Saviour to invite intimacy, even at the time of our deepest humiliation, and seek His likeness in the confident hope that the day will come when that passage will receive its complete fulfillment, " It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is."

There is a secret place of rest  
God's saints alone may know ;  
Thou shalt not find it east or west,  
Though seeking to and fro.  
If thou hadst dwelt within that place  
Then would thine heart the while,  
In vision of the Saviour's face  
Forget all other smile,  
  
Would count it blest to live, to die  
Where He is all in all :  
Where rapt, earth unperceived goes by,  
And from ourselves we fall,

Till from His secret place below  
To mansions fair above,  
He leads thee, there to make thee know  
The perfect joys of love.

**O** LORD, who alone canst give the hearing ear, and the understanding heart : open our minds, we beseech Thee, to understand Thy word which Thou hast in mercy bestowed upon us. Give us ears to hear, that we may apprehend those things which are revealed unto us by Thee. Save us from using Thy word deceitfully, — from wresting it to serve our own purpose, — from being in bondage to the letter of Scripture while we neglect its spirit. Save us also from carelessness and indolence in the use of Thy word ; May we search the Scriptures diligently, and find in them their testimony to Christ. And beholding His glory reflected in them, may we be changed into it ever more and more, till we are made like Him in His heavenly kingdom, through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

## Second Monday.

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Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God.

Now our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts and stablish you in every good word and work.

FATHERHOOD ! what does that word itself teach us ? It speaks of the *communication of a life*, and the reciprocity of love. It rests upon a Divine act, and it involves a human emotion. It means that the Father and the child shall have kindred life — the Father bestowing and the child possessing a life which is derived ; and because derived, kindred ; and because kindred, unfolding itself in likeness to the Father that gave it. And it requires that between the Father's heart and the child's heart there shall pass, in blessed interchange and quick correspondence, answering love, flashing backwards and forwards, like the lightning that touches the earth and rises from it again. A simple appeal to your own consciousness will decide if that be the condition of

all men. Are you, my brother, conscious of anything within you higher than the common life that belongs to you because you are a body and soul? Can you say, "From God's hand I have received the granting and implantation of a new and better life?" Is your claim verified by this, that you are kindred with God in holy affections, in like purposes, loving what He loves, hating what He hates, doing what He wills, accepting what He sends, longing for Himself, and blessed in His presence? Is your sonship proved by the depth and sincerity, the simplicity and power, of your throbbing heart of love to your Father in heaven? Or are all these emotions empty words to you, things that are spoken in pulpits, but to which you have nothing in your life corresponding? There must be a gift of God. A Divine energy must be the source and fountain of all holy and of all Godlike life. Christ comes, comes to make you and me live again as we never lived before; live as possessors of God's love; live tenanted and ruled by a Divine Spirit; live with affections in our hearts which *we* never could kindle there; live with purposes in our souls which *we* never could put there. If we understand, as we are too much disposed to do, that the Gospel simply comes to work out a moral reformation, — why, there is no need for a Gospel at all. If the change were a simple change of habit and action

on the part of men, we could do without a Christ. If the change simply involved a bracing ourselves up to behave better for the future, we could manage somehow or other about as well as or better than we have managed in the past. But if redemption be the giving of life from God ; and if redemption be the change of position in reference to God's love and God's law as well, neither of these two changes can a man effect for himself. You cannot gather up the spilt water ; you cannot any more gather up and re-issue the past life. There is but one Being that can make a change in our position in regard to God, and there is but one Being that can make the change by which man shall become a "new creature." And He *has come*, and He has dwelt with us, and He has walked in the midst of this world, and He knows all about our human agonies and depressions and lowliness, and He has carried in the golden urn of His humanity a new spirit and a new life which He has set down in the midst of the race ; and the urn was broken on the cross of Calvary, and the water flowed out, and whithersoever that water comes there is life, and whithersoever it comes not there is death !

O Lord ! how happy should we be,  
If we could leave our care to Thee,  
If we from sin could rest ;  
And feel at heart that one above,

In perfect wisdom, perfect love,  
Is working for the best.

For when we kneel and cast our care  
Upon our God in humble prayer,  
With strengthened souls we rise.  
Sure that our Father who is nigh  
To hear the ravens when they cry  
Will hear his children's cries.

**A** BBA, Father, fulfill the office of Thy name towards Thy servants; do Thou govern, protect, preserve, sanctify, guide, console them; let them be so enkindled with love for Thee, that they may not be despised by Thee, O most merciful Lord, most tender Father. *Amen.*

## Second Tuesday.

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Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,

Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

OF course, the Apostle does not mean some one special kind of transgression when he says, "the sin which doth so easily beset us." He is speaking about sin generically — all manner of transgression. It is not, as we sometimes hear the words misquoted, "*that* sin which doth *most* easily beset us." *All* sin is according to this passage a besetting sin. It is the characteristic of every kind of transgression, that it circles us round about, that it is always lying in wait and lurking for us. The whole of it therefore, in all its species, is to be cast aside if we would run with patience this appointed race. But then, besides that, there is something else to be put aside as well

as sin. There is "every weight" as well as every transgression — two distinct things, meant to be distinguished. The putting away of both of them is equally needful for the race. The figure is plain enough. We as racers must throw aside the garment that wraps us round — that is to say, "the sin that easily besets us;" and then, besides that, we must lay aside everything else which weights us for the race — that is to say, certain habits or tendencies within us.

Why must we lay them aside? The whole of the Christian's course is a fight. We carry with us a double nature. The best of us knows that "flesh lusts against spirit, and spirit against flesh." Because of that conflict, it follows that if ever there is to be a positive progress in the Christian course, it must be accompanied, and made possible, by the negative process of casting away and losing much that interferes with it. Yes! that race is not merely the easy and natural unfolding of what is within us. The way by which we come to "the measure of the stature of perfect men" in Christ, is not the way by which these material bodies of ours grow up into their perfectness. They have but to be nourished, and they grow. That law of growth is used by our Lord as a description, but only as a partial description, of the way by which the kingdom of Christ



advances in the heart. There is another side to it as well as that. The kingdom advances by warfare as well as by growth. It would be easy if it were but a matter of getting more and more ; but it is not that only. Every step of the road, you have to cut your way through opposing foes. Every step of the road has to be marked with the blood that comes from wounded feet. There is no spiritual life without dying, there is no spiritual growth without putting off "the old man with his affections and lusts." The hands cannot move freely until the bonds be broken. The new Life that is in us cannot run with patience the race that is set before it, until the old Life that is in us is put down and subdued. And if we fancy that we are to get to heaven by a process of persistent growth, without painful self-sacrifice and martyrdom, we know nothing about it. That is not the law. For every new step that we win in the Christian course there must have been the laying aside of something. For every progress in knowledge, there must have been a sacrifice and martyrdom of our own indolence, of our own pride, of our own blindness of heart, of our own perverseness of will, wavering hearts that are drawn away from God by the sweetness of this world. For every progress in strenuous work for God, there must have been a slaying of the selfishness which urges us to work in

our own strength and for our own sake. All along the Christian course there must be set up altars to God on which you sacrifice yourselves, or you will never advance a step. The old legend that the Grecian host lay weather-bound in their port, vainly waiting for a wind to come and carry them to conquest; and that they were obliged to slay a human sacrifice ere the heavens would be propitious and fill their sails,—may be translated into the deepest verity of the Christian life. We may see in it that solemn lesson—no prosperous voyage, and no final conquest, until the natural life has been offered up on the altar of hourly self-denial.

Of course, there are duties which, by our own sinfulness, we make weights, and we dare not, and we cannot if we would, *lay them aside*. A man, for instance, is born into certain circumstances, wherein he must abide; he has “a calling whereunto he is called.” Your trade is a weight, your daily occupations are weights. The spirit of this commandment before us is not, “Leave your plough, and go up into the mountain to pray.” Again, a man finds himself surrounded by friends and domestic ties. He dare not, he must not, he cannot, shake himself free from these. There are cases in which to put away the occupation that has become a weight,—to sacrifice the blessing that has become a hindrance,—

to abstain from the circumstances which clog and impede our Divine life, — is a sin. Where God sets us, we *must* stand, if we die. What God has given us to do, we *must* do. The *duties* that in our weakness become impediments and weights, we *must not* leave.

But for all besides these, anything which, I know, has become a snare to me — unless it be something in the course of my simple duty, or unless it be some one of those relations of life which I cannot get rid of, I must have done with it! It may be sweet, it may be very dear, it may lie very near thy heart, it may be a part of thy very being: — never mind, put it away! If God has said to you, There, my child, stand there, surrounded by temptations! — then, like a man, stand to your colors, and do not take these words as if they said, — I am to leave a place because I find myself too weak to resist — a place in which God, for the good of others or for the good of myself, has manifestly set me. But for all other provinces of life, if I feel myself weak I shall be wise to fly. As Christ has said, “If thy hand offend thee, cut it off:” it is better, it is *better* for thee to go into life with that maimed and bleeding stump, an imperfect man, than with all thy natural capacities and powers to be utterly lost at the last! Better a maimed man in

Christ's fold, than a perfect man, if that were possible, outside of it.

With every weight now cast aside,  
In Him my steadfast thoughts abide.  
The sin most easy to beset  
Is, in His strength, with courage met.

Temptation cannot come to me  
Which He doth not as instant see.  
No form of trial I must bear  
But He hath known and still doth share.

I hear His voice; I touch His hands,  
Which draw me nearer where He stands.  
If sudden pain my soul alarms,  
I feel the clasping of His arms.

If I am tempted to deny,  
I only turn and meet His eye:  
My heart doth break, and break again,  
Before its speechless love and pain.

O grace, beyond my power of thought,  
For me by my Redeemer bought!  
O love, whose wondrous depth and height  
Is far beyond my mortal sight!

O joy no language can express!  
For me — for me the blessedness!  
The stainless robe, the glorious crown,  
For which He laid the ransom down!

**T**HOU, O Lord, art full of compassion, long-suffering, and pity. Thou sparest when we deserve punishment, and in Thy wrath thinkest upon mercy. Turn then Thine anger from us and give us peace: and enable us by Thy grace to redeem the time which we have spent in sloth, vanity, and wickedness; to make use of Thy gifts to the honor of Thy name; and to lead a new life in Thy faith, fear, and love. Release us, O Lord, from the bands of those sins which, by our frailty, we have committed. Strengthen us in our struggles with temptation. Fill us with just hopes, true faith, and holy consolations; and enable us to do our duty in the state of life to which Thou hast been pleased to call us, without disturbance from anxious cares or evil imaginations, that in all our thoughts, words, and actions, we may glorify Thy holy name; and finally, obtain everlasting joy and felicity, through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
*Amen.*

## Third Wednesday.

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For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear ; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God : and if children, then heirs ; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together.

Do not account of small importance the awful sense in which Christ's suffering stands as a thing by itself and unapproachable, a solitary pillar rising up, above the waste of time, to which all men everywhere are to turn with the one thought, "I can do nothing like that ; I need to do nothing like it ; it has been done once, and once for all ; and what I have to do is simply to lie down before Him, and let the power and the blessings of that death and those sufferings flow into my heart." The Divine Redeemer makes eternal redemption. The sufferings of Christ -- the

sufferings of His life, and the sufferings of His death — both because of the nature which bore them, and of the aspect which they wore in regard to us, are in their source, in their intensity, in their character, and consequences, unapproachable, incapable of repetition, and needing no repetition whilst the world shall stand. But then, do not let us forget that the very books and writers in the New Testament that preach most broadly Christ's sole, all-sufficient, eternal redemption for the world, by His sufferings and death, turn round and say to us too, " 'Be planted together in the *likeness* of His death: ' you are ' crucified to the world ' by the cross of Christ; you are to ' fill up that which is behind of the sufferings of Christ. ' " He Himself speaks of our drinking of the cup that He drank of, and being baptized with the baptism that He was baptized with, if we desire to sit yonder on His throne, and share with Him in His glory.

Now what do the Apostles, and what does Christ himself, mean, by such solemn words as these? Some people shrink from them, and say that it is trenching upon the central doctrines of the Gospel, when we speak about drinking of the cup which Christ drank of. They ask, Can it be? Yes, it can be, if you will think thus: If a Christian has the spirit and life of Christ in him, his career will be moulded, imperfectly but really, by the same spirit that dwelt in

his Lord ; and similar causes will produce corresponding effects. The life of Christ which — divine, pure, incapable of copy and repetition — in one aspect has passed away forever from men, remains to be lived, in another view of it, by every Christian, who in like manner has to fight with the world, who in like manner has to resist temptation, who in like manner has to stand, by God's help, pure and sinless, in so far as the new nature of him is concerned, in the midst of a world that is full of evil. For were the sufferings of the Lord only the sufferings that were wrought upon Calvary? Were the sufferings of the Lord only the sufferings which came from the "contradiction of sinners against Himself?" Were the sufferings of the Lord only the sufferings which were connected with the bodily afflictions and pain, precious and priceless as they were, and operative causes of our redemption as they were? Oh no. Conceive of that perfect, sinless, really human life, in the midst of a system of things that is all full of corruption and of sin; coming ever and anon against misery, and wrong-doing, and rebellion; and ask yourselves whether part of His sufferings did not spring from the contact of the sinless Son of man with a sinful world, and the apparently vain attempt to influence and leaven that sinful world with care for itself and love for the Father. If there had been



nothing more than that, yet Christ's sufferings as the Son of God in the midst of sinful men would have been deep and real. "O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you?" was wrung from Him by the painful sense of want of sympathy between His aims and theirs. "Oh that I had wings like a dove, for then I would fly away and be at rest," must often be the language of those who are like Him in spirit, and in consequent sufferings.

The death of Christ is a type of the Christian's life, which is to be one long-protracted and daily dying to sin, to self, to the world. The crucifixion of the old manhood is to be the life's work of every Christian, through the power of faith in that cross by which "the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." That thought comes over and over again in all forms of earnest presentation in the Apostle's teaching. Do not slur it over as if it were a mere fanciful metaphor. It carries in its type a most solemn reality. On this high level and not upon the lower one of the consideration that Christ will help us to bear outward infirmities and afflictions, do we find the true meaning of all that Scripture teaching that says indeed, "Yes, our sufferings are *His*;" but lays the foundation of it in this, "His sufferings are *ours*." It begins by telling us that Christ has done

a work and borne a sorrow that no second can ever do. Then it tells us that Christ's life of obedience — which, because it *was* a life of obedience, was a life of suffering, and brought Him into a condition of hostility to the men around Him — is to be repeated in us. It sets before us the cross of Calvary, and the sorrows and pains that were felt there ; — and it says to us, Christian men and women, if you want the power for holy living, have fellowship in that atoning death ; and if you want the pattern of holy living, look at that cross and feel, "I am crucified to the world by it ; and the life that I live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God."

What if thou always suffer tribulation,  
And if thy Christian warfare never cease ;  
The gaining of the quiet habitation  
Shall gather thee to everlasting peace.

But here we all must suffer, walking lonely  
The path that Jesus once Himself hath gone ;  
Watch thou in patience through this hour only,  
This one dark hour before the eternal dawn.

Thou must walk on, however man upbraid thee  
With Him who trod the wine-press all alone ;  
Thou wilt not find one human hand to aid thee,  
One human soul, to comprehend thine own.

**O** LORD Jesus Christ, our sympathizing Saviour, who for man didst bear the agony and the Cross, draw Thou near to Thy suffering servants ; hallow all their crosses in this life, and crown them hereafter where all tears are wiped away ; where, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, Thou livest and reignest, one God, world without end. *Amen.*

## Third Thursday.

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Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient ; stablish your hearts ; for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called. The time is short. It remaineth that they that weep should be as though they wept not, and they that rejoice as though they rejoiced not ; and they that buy as though they possessed not ; and they that use this world as not abusing it ; for the fashion of this world passeth away.

It is our chief difficulty about the formation of Christian character, that we do not give enough time to it. We do not make it sufficiently one continual work through our whole life, or so long as we have the conscious exercise of the free will. We do not begin early enough. We leave children too much to chance ; to their own wayward wills, instead of regarding them from the moment of their baptism as temples of the Holy Ghost — as objects of love for the angels, and the deeper love of their Lord. Very early in life troubles arise which cloud middle life

and hang heavily over old age. Then, again, if we do that, we are all too apt, when persons have passed the middle of life, or even earlier, when they have reached the age of discretion, and at Confirmation have spoken out before the Church and God, to consider that we need not interfere any more, or talk to them about such matters as prayer, and the difficulties which beset their soul. We think it would almost be an impertinence to a man, and a wrong to his independence, to do so. But is that right? Is the battle of life over at twenty-one? We may be of age for some things, but yet only children in the service of Christ. Reflect for a moment on the warnings we have in the Great Book which God has written for us. No book that I know of speaks out so outspokenly as the Bible. And what do we find there? What are some of the great examples of the buffeting of Satan? We have heard of the patience of Job, but do we always remember that he is brought before us as a type of one buffeted by Satan? And at what age? He was a married man, in middle life, settled in his place; one with a family; one with wealth around him. Such was the man, at that age, when buffeted. He much needed to keep on his watchfulness. We all know of the royal penitent, David. Ah! but when did his trouble come? Not as a youth on the hills about Bethlehem:

not in all the action and excitement of army life, and all the gayety of the court of Saul, but when, in mid-life, in married life, he had won a position which should have satisfied his ambition, and he might have begun to think of rest. It was then the cloud that darkened David's life overshadowed him. It was in middle life that he needed to preserve the duty of discipline. What was the age of the penitent Apostle when he had to be restored? It was in married life: it was when he had advanced beyond what many consider the time when discipline and deepening are necessary. If I may say it, with all reverence, do we always remember that when the Captain of our Salvation was pleased to descend into the arena of temptation and throw a lustre round it, by proving to us that temptation is not sin unless we yield, He was thirty years of age? And next, if we do not give time enough, neither are we thorough enough when we do set about it. If you would but think of some of the warnings which are given us in the early dispensation of God! Think of the thoroughness, at least in symbol, with which the typical sin of leprosy was to be put away — how the man was to be put out of the camp — how when he is brought in there is to be the cedar and hyssop, and water and blood, the living and dead bird — the life through death — the purification, the scarlet, new blood flowing again

when he is brought within the camp. Then there is the reconsecration of the man, almost point for point like the consecration of the High Priest. And then after this purification and consecration there comes the entering of the religious life again, and the sacrifice goes on with all the greater thoroughness. Or look into the New Testament. We are so familiar with the examples there, that we pass them by as though they meant nothing. Christ would tell us that the religious life is not merely outward, but essentially something within, the improving the inward man, inward holiness, the working of the heart and mind towards Him. This was the point on which our Lord insisted. Some of His parables take their outward form as naturally from what He watched in the inward heart, as others take their outward form from the scattering of the seed in the field. The rich man says secretly to his soul, "Soul, thou hast much goods;" but God answers his secret words as though they were spoken openly and aloud. The Apostles are murmuring about the first place, and He makes them silent by asking them what they were talking about? In the heart where the thoughts are going on is the place where He would have us watch. It is the contents of the hearts which leave a defiling mark upon the man quite as much as that which the world sees without. From within — here

is where the scar begins which offends the eye of the Captain of our warfare. And so, again, if we listen to some of the simple commands, how high they reach — “Be ye perfect.” We do not aim thoroughly enough; nor aim enough for the victory with Him. So, again, if we turn to some of the earlier Christian writings, how did the Bishop of Jerusalem, St. Cyril, teach even the catechumen? “Look up,” he said, “look up to the angels and archangels; see in those creatures, once like yourselves, beings who, by the aid of God’s power, have reached a state in which now they sin no more, but in perfect happiness do His will — in perfect peace abide in the highest heaven of His presence. Look up at those creatures who have reached this perfect state. Gabriel and Michael needed the help of God as well as you. They have had their help, and therefore look to them, and see in them what an exalted state of perfection God can enable a creature to reach.” We never outgrow the need of watchfulness, — till we come to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

What are we set on earth for? Say, to toil —  
Nor seek to leave thy tending of the vines,  
For all the heat o’ the day, till it declines,  
And death’s mild curfew shall from work assoil.  
God did anoint thee with his odorous oil,



To wrestle, not to reign ; and He assigns  
All thy tears over, like pure crystallines,  
For younger fellow-workers of the soil  
To wear for amulets. So others shall  
Take patience, labor, to their heart and hand,  
From thy hand, and thy heart, and thy brave cheer.  
And God's grace fructify through thee to all.  
The least flower, with a brimming cup, may stand,  
And share its dew-drop with another near.

**O** GOD, who in the beginning didst create the heavens and the earth, and didst give unto all men their work, and the bounds of their habitation, grant to us that we be not unwise, but understanding Thy will : not slothful, but diligent in Thy work : that we run not as uncertainly, nor fight Thy battles as those that beat the air. Whatsoever our hand findeth to do, may we do it with our might : that when Thou shalt call Thy laborers to give them their reward, we may so have run that we may obtain ; so have fought the good fight as to receive the crown of eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

## Third Friday.

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Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross.

He that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

Be at peace among yourselves.

If when ye do well and suffer for it ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.

WHAT our Lord came, above all things, to teach us, what He taught us, what He teaches us now, by His very Being as Man, what He preached in act from His birth in the manger to His death upon the Cross, what He made the first step to His Apostles who were filled with the Holy Ghost, is to "become as little children." Such rules as these may be useful. They have been tried.

Know thyself! Pray God to show thee thyself. Bear in God's light to see thyself, bared of all outward advantages, what thou thyself hast made thy-

self, what thou hast been, what thou art. By God's grace, the sight will never again let thee be proud.

Keep ever present with thee the knowledge of thine own infirmity. Never seek praise, nor speak of any good in thee, except for some good end, nor say what may draw out praise. Yea rather if it be useful to speak of thine own experience, it is best mostly to hide, in some true way, that it is thine own.

Do not even blame thyself if it makes others think thee humble.

Mistrust thyself in everything, and in the very least things seek, whenever thou canst remember it, the help of God.

Be afraid of the praise of others. If there be good in thee, own it at least in thine heart to be God's, and think of thy evil and thy sins.

Take patiently any humiliation from others. It is a precious gift of God. "Humiliation is the way to humility, as patience to peace, reading to knowledge." If thou endurest not to be humbled, thou canst not be humble.

In all things humble thyself under the Hand of God. Take all things, through whomsoever they come, as from Him.

Do not excuse thyself, if blamed, unless respect, or love, or the cause of truth and of God require it.

It is of more value to thee, to detect one grain of fault in thyself than to show that thou deservest not, as it were, a hundred weight of blame.

Be not careful to conceal any ignorance or fault in thee, unless it would hurt another to know thou hast it.

Do willingly humble offices, humbly.

It is but for a short time at the longest. Seek here to be humble with the humble Jesus, and He will exalt thee. As thou becomest, by His grace, lowly here, thou shalt be exalted there. *There* is greatness, which none envies; treasures, of which thou wilt deprive none; joys, in which all will joy with thee. There, not thine own lips, or thine own thoughts, but thy Saviour will praise thee. Seek humility and thou wilt find it, and when thou hast found it thou wilt love it, and by God's grace wilt not part with it; with it thou canst not perish. Yea, thou wilt reign forever with Jesus, who was humbled for thee, and with the choirs in the heavenly dwellings. For there too thou wilt be humble, not as now in the need of all things, but in the possession of all things, in glory, and honor, and power, and beauty, and knowledge, and wisdom, of which we have but the faintest shadow here; and all from God, and in God. For there, if thou attain, thou shalt cast thy crown before the throne, saying,

“Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honor, and power;” and giving back all to God, thou shalt receive all from God, in bliss everlasting, through His Merits who humbled Himself to thee, that thou being humbled with Him here shouldst enter into His glory and His joy.

One evening, in a self-exultant mood,  
Unto myself I cried,  
“Surely mine actions of this day were good,  
And I may rest to-night well satisfied.  
I will the records note.”  
My pen, how readily it wrote  
A tale of service unto God and man.  
Once more the page to scan  
I cast mine eye;  
And in a halo of bright vanity  
The letters seemed to float.  
Deeming at length the ink was dry  
I closed the book;  
But on the morrow when I came to look  
Into this diary so fair once more,  
I found, with pain and ruth,  
Instead of that of truth  
That I had used the ink of pride,  
Which had not dried;  
And through this sad mistake  
My treasured page was blotted o’er and o’er,  
And it from out the book I tore;  
And on the next I penciled this short line —  
“For Thy Son’s sake

Forgive the sin of every deed of mine."

These words transfigured into gold did shine.

**O** LORD Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, who wast given both to be a sacrifice for sin and also an ensample of godly life, who didst bid us take up our cross daily and follow Thee, make, we pray Thee, the yoke of Thy commandments sweet, and the burden of Thy cross light, unto our souls. Conform Thy servants, O Lord, to the likeness of Thy passion. Give us grace, O Eternal Father, that we strive to keep the way of the holy cross, and carry in our hearts the image of Jesus crucified. Make us cheerfully resign ourselves to Thy divine will, that, being fashioned after His life-giving death, we may die according to the flesh, and live according to the spirit of righteousness, through Jesus Christ, our Lord and only Saviour. *Amen.*

## Third Saturday.

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Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive: but speaking the truth in love may grow up into Him in all things which is the Head, even Christ.

HAVE true and sublime ideals for your youthful fervor. These will preserve it to old age. Aspire ardently after truth, purity, many-sided charity, holiness of life; let everything else be put under these things. Be convinced of great truths, feel in the depths of your heart their beauty and their force. Be able to say, "I know that God is my Father, and the Father of mankind; I know that the world and I have a Redeemer from evil; I know that mankind has been made Divine in Christ; I know that there is a Divine Spirit in me and in Mankind, who is educating us towards the perfect

life. I know One who is the Resurrection and the Life to all mankind." You cannot be convinced of mighty truths like these without being set on fire by them, and the fire will kindle every intellectual and imaginative enthusiasm which you possess into an abiding ardor of action so instinct with that from which it flowed, that it will propagate the sacred energy and set others on fire with the same. In this manner seek to correct and develop your youthfulness of nature in the midst of advancing years. By and by calm will come—not the calm of stagnation, but the calm which sits in the midst of intensity of feeling. That which disturbs and tosses our unregulated enthusiasm is vanity—desire of fame—the intruding element of personal interests. Our fervor of spirit becomes quiet, yet strong, when its highest impulse is beyond ourselves, when we can fix our most ardent wishes upon Christ, and find in Him the source of a sustained aspiration. For it is not only truths which inspire us, but truths embodied in One whom we can love. Pride, selfishness, want of charity, may creep in when we devote ourselves to noble ideas alone. But when we love them in a perfect Person who loves us, self and conceit are wholly lost, and in their loss calm is made coördinate with ardent feeling. The most inspiring ideal of the Apostle Paul is when he holds out to the dis-



ciple the prospect of coming in the knowledge of the Son of God to a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

Dear Lord, of all the words of thine  
Which for our comfort ring and shine  
Through sacred air, on sacred page,  
From sacred lips in every age,  
No one has brought such blessed cheer  
To me, — no one is half so dear,  
No one so surely cometh home  
To every soul, as this which from  
A pure heart wrung with sorrow came,  
“For He remembereth our frame.”

Not merely that He can forgive,  
And for His love's sake bid us live  
When we in trespasses and sins  
Are dead — but that our weakness wins  
From Him such pity as alone  
To fathers' yearning hearts is known;  
Such pity that He even calls  
Us sons, and in our lowest falls  
Sees never utter, hopeless shame,  
“For He remembereth our frame.”

Dear Lord, to Thee, a thousand years  
Are as a day; with contrite tears  
One prayer I pray! My little life, —  
Its good, its ill, its grief, its strife, —  
Oh, let it in Thy holy sight,  
Like empty watches of a night,

Forgotten be ! And of my name,  
Dear Lord, who knowest all our frame,  
Let there remain no memory  
Save of the thing I longed to be !

**L**IGHTEN our hearts, O Lord, Lover of mankind, with the incorruptible light of Thy divine knowledge, and open the eyes of our understanding, that we may discern the truth of thy joyful tidings. Implant in us the blessed fear of Thy commandments, so that, treading under foot all carnal desires, we may begin to lead a spiritual life, our only thought being to please Thee. For Thou art the light of our hearts and souls, O God Christ, and to Thee we render the glory, and to Thy eternal Father, and to Thy most holy and good and life-giving Spirit, now and forever, world without end. *Amen.*

## Third Sunday.

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And he looked up steadfastly into heaven, and said, Behold I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.

No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.

Consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.

SINCE whatsoever befalls us of suffering or ill is, however it comes, the will of God to us, what then should we do when it comes? Surely forget, as far as we may, all besides, and go up in thought to the Eternal Throne, and behold in mind the heavens opened and Jesus standing at the right hand of God, thence looking down upon us, allotting to us our trials, even through the wrong tempers of men; thence passing down his strength to us, to bear them; thence preparing us for the place in heaven which He ascended on high to prepare for us. Oh how do all the ills of life fade into nothing; how glad may

any trial be, though painful to flesh and blood ; how should we greet as goods the evils of life ; how would its sadness become gladness, its thorns a crown, if we but see in them the Eternal Hand of God, moulding us by them for everlasting glory ; refining away, through outward ills, our own inward evils ; chastening us, that we might not perish, checking us, that we might not go astray ; recalling us when astray ; alluring us by His goodness ; and then again weaning us from the world by its very unrest and suffering, that in Him we might find everlasting rest and peace.

“ There should be no greater comfort to Christian persons,” our Church teaches when we are sick, “ than to be made like unto Christ, by suffering patiently adversities, troubles, and sicknesses. For He Himself went not up to joy, but first He suffered pain ; He entered not into His Glory before He was crucified. So truly our way to eternal joy is to suffer here with Christ ; and our door to enter into eternal life is gladly to die with Christ, that we may rise again from death, and dwell with Him in everlasting life.”

Death, sickness, pain of body and soul, came to us by sin. We are sinners sick in soul, more or less, whether we know our sickness or not. They know their sickness best who are least sick. It is the worst

sickness not to know that we are sick. St. John, whom Jesus loved, says, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves." Life is one long sickness, in which those of us who are using God's grace are regaining our health, until the time come, when He who "forgiveth all our sins," shall "heal all our infirmities, and crown us with mercy and loving-kindness."

"No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous but grievous" Every, the least, trial has its own weight. Were it not so, people would not bear trials so ill. It is not lack of faith to feel an ill, nor to be oppressed by it, nor to be "heavy and exceeding sorrowful under it." Our loving Lord sanctified such human feelings by the heaviness which, in the garden, He allowed to come over His soul. The heart may, and must, rise and sink; we can by God's grace, control it, hold it down, keep it outwardly still, hinder it from having any wrong vent; we cannot hush its beatings. Hard words *will* vex; unkindness *will* pierce; neglect *will* wound; threatened evils *will* make the soul quiver; sharp pain or weariness *will* rack the body, or make it restless; cold *will* fret the frame; hunger *will* gnaw it. But what says the Psalmist? "When my heart is vexed, I will complain." To whom? Not *of* God, but *to* God.

As thou learnest this lesson, to carry all thy sor-

rows to God, and lie at the Saviour's feet, and spread thy griefs before Him, thou wilt find a calm come over thee, thou knowest not whence. Thy heart will still rise and sink, not restlessly, nor waywardly, not in violent gusts of passion ; but whether rising or sinking, amid all outward heavings of this world's waves, resting in stillness on the bosom of the ocean of the Love of God.

Then shalt thou learn, not to endure only patiently, but, in everything against thy will humbly and quickly to see and to love the loving Will of God. Thy faith and thy love and thy hope will grow, the more thou seest the work of God with thee ; thou wilt joy in thy sorrow, and thy sorrow will be turned into joy. It will be a joy to thee, to be likened in suffering to thy Lord, even though it be like the dying robber at His side.

Upon my lips she laid her touch divine,  
And merry speech and careless laughter died ;  
She fixed her melancholy eyes on mine,  
And would not be denied.

I saw the west wind loose his cloudlets white,  
In flocks careering through the April sky ;  
I could not sing though joy was at its height,  
For she stood silent by.

I watched the lovely evening fade away,  
A mist was lightly drawn across the stars ;

She broke my quiet dream — I heard her say,  
Behold your prison bars !

Earth's gladness shall not satisfy your soul —  
The beauty of the world in which you live,  
The crowning grace that sanctifies the whole,  
That I alone can give.

I heard and shrank away from her afraid,  
But Sorrow held me, and would still abide ;  
Youth's bounding pulses slackened and obeyed  
With slowly ebbing tide.

“ Look thou beyond the evening sky,” she said,  
“ Beyond the changing splendors of the day ;  
Accept the pain, the weariness, the dread,  
Accept and bid me stay.”

I turned and clasped her close with sudden strength,  
And slowly, sweetly, I became aware,  
Within my arms God's angel stood at length,  
White-robed, and calm, and fair.

And now I look beyond the evening star,  
Beyond the changing splendors of the day,  
Knowing the pain He sends more precious far,  
More beautiful than they.

THOU, O Lord Jesus, art both, to me, the Mirror of suffering and the Reward of the sufferer. Each strongly urges me on, and mightily kindles me. Thou teachest my hands to fight, by the example of Thy virtue. Thou, after victory, crownest my head with the presence of Thy Majesty. Whether

I look on Thee fighting, or look for Thee, not crowning only, but the Crown, both ways Thou allurest me wondrously. Both ways art Thou a most mighty cord to draw me. Draw me after Thee ; gladly do I follow Thee, more gladly to enjoy Thee. And with all Thy saints I will praise Thee, world without end ! *Amen.*



### Third Monday.

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And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle? They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard.

Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.

The kingdom of God is not meat and drink.

MANY disquisitions have been written to explain this doctrine of the eleventh hour. There is no very dark difficulty or obscurity about it. No one parable is made to illustrate with precision every point it seems to touch. What Christ plainly meant is this: not that it is as well to turn and serve and confess him, late in life as early; not that there is no peculiar blessing on the beautiful and acceptable vows of childhood's consecration, and the piety that grows and strengthens as we grow in stature and in years; not, above all, that any sinner who purposely postpones his submission to gain time for transgression and neglect can look for his Lord's acceptance; but this rather, — that the earnestness and sincerity of a

soul's conversion is of more consequence than the time of it. In these great interests and concerns of eternity, the element of time falls very much out of the question. It is not, "When did you come?" but "Have you come at all?" It is not, "How long may I put off being blessed with peace and glory in Christ Jesus, and then have it after all?" — but it is, "How soon may I make sure of that power and that peace, and let that glory fall in on my saved and thankful heart?" It is a present command; not for yesterday, not for to-morrow; not a message of despair that the great work was not done sooner; not a message of delay, as if it could as well be done later. It is for the passing hour. It is for this accepted time. "Go ye," now, while the day lasts. Where does this vineyard of Christian service lie? Is it somewhere outside the limits of the world's common work? Is it so bounded off from the ordinary vineyards or everyday employments by visible lines, — as a state is from the states which lie around it, — that in order to enter it you must leave all these, and in order to work in them you must forsake this? So taught, too much, a corrupt and morbid religion which was never learned of Jesus and His Apostles, and which we hope, is fast losing its superstitious hold, never to yoke the mind of Christendom again. The house-

holder of the parable is the Lord of all this world and of all its lawful labor. His vineyard includes all its vineyards, — business, study, society, and home. They belong to Him ; and this Kingdom, as surely as it is planted anywhere, is planted in the midst of them. Whatever work is done for Him will be done in them. Whatever workman or disciple follows Him will be found in some of them. The field is the world ; the Sabbath was made for man ; and the Church was meant to sanctify and bless every part and power of our life.

And yet, this voice, this command, this vineyard, this work, all imply a special service, a special character, a way and a walk through this world, distinct from the world's way, and more distinct from any other than each of them from the rest. The voice speaks directly into the midst of these familiar occupations and multitudes of men, and says, Come out ; stand forth ; there is a sense in which you *must* be separate ; you must go spiritually into another vineyard ; there must be the beginning and the growth in you of a life so new and so different, — *i. e.* so evidently drawn and quickened out of the life of the Son of God, that men, taking knowledge of you, will know that you have been with Jesus, and that your inmost strength feeds daily on Him. Money must be got, not for itself, or to be kept and counted,

but for Christian uses. There must be no mean acts in getting it, no lying, no fraud, no greed, no dishonest bargain or hollow pretenses. Houses must be kept not for luxury or ostentation, or to outdo other houses in the neighborhood, not as animals' stalls to eat and drink and sleep in, not as wardrobes for dress, or mere shelters from the weather, but as the generous training-schools of noble virtues, nurseries of pure affections, retreats from the mad fashions and wearing care of a selfish society, oratories for prayer. Industry must start from a new point. Study must seek a superhuman wisdom. The arts which make life beautiful must illustrate its loftiest aims and inspire it with spiritual aspirations. Nor is this all. With the heart you must believe unto righteousness. With the mouth you must make confession unto salvation. All this must be positive, earnest, personal, special, and manifest. You might be the most punctilious and successful merchant in the market, the ripest scholar in the schools, the most popular and brilliant favorite in society, and the most notable and amiable housekeeper in the town, — and yet, your Saviour says, except it is all done in a lowly and self-renouncing faith in the Son of God, crucified for you, you are none of His. For at the best you are a short-comer and offender, and the sentence of God's pure law is against you. You

may go through the whole Gospel, with all its large and tender and free and merciful offers of life everlasting ; wherever you stop and ask, What shall I do to obtain this great salvation ? the answer is never, — “ Redouble your business enterprise ; extend your secular knowledge ; accomplish yourself in the agreeable qualities of good society ; be more careful or indefatigable in the charge of your earthly house.” The answer is always one and the same ; Repent, believe, and be baptized ; take up the cross, and be not ashamed of your Saviour before man. Do this, and you also will be going into the vineyard ; after that, you will put your faith into all your honest and faithful work, and, being in the world, will not be *of* the world. The stamp of another loyalty will be upon you. The spring of another joy and liberty will be in you. The difference will be in the motive more than in the movement ; in the spirit more than in the form. And then, — not till then, — will the great end and object of your creation, as a spiritual being, a son or daughter of God, begin to be realized in your life.

Into a vineyard that the Lord had made  
I hastened, knowing He had work for all,  
And hearing that He did for laborers call;  
But much dismayed,  
Fearing, however I might toil,  
I should the given task but spoil.

He, seeing I was so afraid,  
Gave me a simple corner in the shade,  
Where, hidden from all eyes save His alone,  
The passing of mere prying feet,  
The noon-tide burden and the heat  
Of wide renown,  
I should but tend some seeds that He had sown  
Till they were grown.  
Oh with what blessedness and heart-content  
I kept the well-tilled soil!  
Though others might have smiled  
At labor suited even to a child,  
I murmured not at those who had been sent  
To grander vineyard labors, and who went  
Obedient to the building of its towers,  
While my poor powers  
Were equal only to the growth of flowers;  
My conscience and my Master satisfied,  
I cared for naught beside.

**O** LORD Jesus Christ, who for our sakes didst become poor, that we through Thy poverty might be rich, and didst teach us that, in ministering to the very least of Thy members, we might minister unto Thyself, find us some lowly work to do for others, and give us grace to do it as unto Thee, and not as unto men, that we may receive, not for our labors, but for Thy merits, the crown of everlasting glory, and magnify and praise Thy name, world without end. *Amen.*

## Third Tuesday.

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Quench not the Spirit.

When [the heart] shall turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away. Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

NEVER should we let the world and its work quench the demands of the spirit within us which desires union with the living God. If you allow the noise of your enthralling business to drown those inward cries, they grow fainter then and fainter, and the spirit falls into lethargy. The noblest portion of your being is left ignorant as an infant. Is that to be a complete man?

Feed that immortal thing with its true food, love to God, which is love to God's character in Christ; open its doors to the education of the Spirit of God, and be not troubled but rather nobly proud, if your spirit, trained by His power, prevent some of those

many transactions in public life which make a fortune by running to the very edge of dishonesty, or hinder you from taking a place the comfort of which would have to be bought by the sacrifice of convictions. A fortune — a position — these are not the first things, in spite of the lying world which says they are. The spirit which can hold fast to truth, though it means the acceptance of ruin — the spirit which can refuse to be enriched at the expense of honor — the spirit which can do nothing which sins against its neighbor, is better than the life of Dives or the leadership of the fashionable world.

Let your effort be to be many-sided, while you cling fast to your particular work. This is our Christian duty. For Christ came to save the whole of our nature, to present us, at the end, body, soul, and spirit, perfect to his Father.

Our morality becomes formal. Truth, purity, and the rest become habits, like the habit of walking. Beware lest they become Pharisaic, and pass from habits into mere forms. There is but one way of avoiding this, and that is by cherishing a great aim, which will not let us be satisfied. Christ gives us that aim: "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect." And He Himself supplies the motive, for the great love which we nourish to Him will sweep us continually out of the region of



formal morality into that realm where the life of self-sacrifice produces natural and noble action.

Our business is to go forward and to redeem the past. We may not get back the freshness of early inspiration ; but we may attain something better — the resolute heart of noble faith, which, trusting in a Saviour of men, has the confidence to take up duty for his sake and for the sake of men his brothers, and, though failure and failure come, to win at last, through the doing of duty, those profounder, calmer and more enduring feelings of nearness to God, which will bear the test of time and overcome at the end the shame and fear of death.

Oh the bitter shame and sorrow,  
That a time could ever be  
When I let the Saviour's pity  
Plead in vain, and proudly answered,  
" All of self, and none of Thee."

Yet He found me ; I beheld Him  
Bleeding on the accursed tree,  
Heard Him pray, " Forgive them, Father ! "  
And my wistful heart said faintly,  
" Some of self, and some of Thee."

Day by day His tender mercy,  
Healing, helping, full and free,  
Sweet and strong, and ah ! so patient,  
Brought me lower, while I whispered,  
" Less of self, and more of Thee."

Higher than the highest heavens,  
Deeper than the deepest sea,  
Lord, Thy love at last hath conquered ;  
Grant me now my soul's desire —  
“ None of self, and all of Thee.”

**O** HOLY Christ, King of patriarchs and light of the prophets ; master of the apostles and the fortitude of martyrs ; the crown of the just made perfect in heaven, and the only hope of Thy servants on earth, grant to us Thy weak and wandering followers that Thy great name may be sanctified by us on the earth as it is by the blessed spirits in heaven ; that beholding the beauty of Thy righteousness we may be transformed into Thy likeness ; that we may always and everywhere behave ourselves as in Thy pure and immaculate presence, carefully endeavoring while we acknowledge the wonders of Thy power to keep and obey Thy commandments, and never to lose our souls, or our portion in Thee, though it were to gain the whole world. Hear us, O Christ, for Thy great goodness' sake.  
*Amen.*

## Fourth Wednesday.

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Tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope.

In patience possess ye your souls.

Even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps.

PATIENCE is the endurance of any evil, out of the love of God, as the will of God. There is nothing too little, in which to approve ourselves to God; nothing too little, in which, without God, we should not fail; nothing too great, which, with the help of God, we may not endure. The offices of patience are as varied as the ills of this life. We have need of it with ourselves and with others; with those below and those above us, and with our own equals; with those who love us and those who love us not; for the greatest things and for the least; against sudden inroads of trouble and under our daily burdens; disappointments as to the weather or the breaking of the heart, in the weariness of the body, or the wearing of the soul; in our own failure of

duty, or in other's failure towards us ; in every day wants, or in the aching of sickness or the decay of age ; in disappointment, bereavement, losses, injuries, reproaches ; in heaviness of the heart or its sickness amid delayed hopes, or the weight of this body of death, from which we would be free, that we may have no more struggle with sin within, or temptation without, but attain to our blessed and everlasting peace in our rest in God. In all these things, from childhood's little troubles to the martyr's sufferings, patience is the grace of God, whereby we endure evil for the love of God, and keep ourselves still and motionless, that we offend not God.

All other virtues and graces have need of patience to perfect or to secure them. Patience interposes herself and receives and stops every dart which the evil one aims at them. "Patience is the root and guardian of all virtue ;" impatience is the enemy of all. Impatience disquiets the soul, makes her weary of conflict, ready to lay aside her armor and to leave difficult duty. Impatience, by troubling the smooth mirror of the soul, hinders her from reflecting the face of God ; by its din, it hinders her from hearing the voice of God. It makes the soul outrun or fall short of the will of God. Impatience listens to nothing, heeds nothing, fears nothing, hopes nothing, judges aright of nothing, perseveres in nothing

except in restlessness. Impatience is a burden to itself, distrusts man, rebels against God. It shakes every virtue and enters into almost every sin. It casts aside every remedy for itself or for any other fault. Impatience made Cain a murderer, and Absalom a parricide, and Judas a Deicide. Impatience, not waiting for God, turns even goods into evils.

How does it shake faith to be impatient of evils, either in the world, or in the Church, or those which befall a person's own self! How does impatience with others' defects chill love, or impatience with even our own failings and short-comings extinguish hope! To be impatient at blame is a blight to humility; at contradiction, destroys meekness; at injuries, quenches long-suffering; at sharp words, mars gentleness; at having one's own will crossed, obedience. Impatience at doing the same thing again and again hinders perseverance; impatience of bodily wants surprises people into intemperance, or leads them to deceive, lie, steal.

"In patience," our blessed Lord tells us, "possess ye your souls." By patience, we have the keeping of our own souls; we command ourselves, and our passions are subdued to us, and "commanding ourselves, we begin to possess that which we are." What is it to possess a thing but to have entire command over it, that we may do with it what we will?

What, then, is it to "possess the soul," but to be lord over all its powers, motions, emotions, and, by the grace of God, to control and direct them according to the will of God? Whence even the World calls a man "self-possessed" who cannot be thrown off his guard, but, gathered up within himself, and immovable, has a clear, steady command of all the powers of his mind. He is spiritually "self-possessed" who by the grace of God so keeps himself, that "no vehemence of delight masters him, no tribulation wears him out, no sudden temptation carries him away, no unworthy affection draws him down from God."

A ship unlading, busy sea-brown hands  
Are lifting blocks of marble, one by one;  
Quarried where fair Carrara's golden sands  
And purple hills lie sleeping in the sun.

The workman earned his share of daily bread;  
The merchant counted up his gains in gold;  
"What unwrought statues there," the artist said,  
"What lines of beauty, rare and manifold!

"What grace and glory from these blocks shall spring!  
What light shall clothe them in a little while!  
This shapeless block, in beauty blossoming,  
Shall breathe high thoughts or wear an angel's smile."

O Lives that in a martyr-army stand,  
May God's sweet message come to you and me.

We are the marble, His the Sculptor-Hand  
That fashions us for all eternity.

We only feel the pain His chastenings give;  
The sharp incisions only can we see.  
And He alone, by whom we move and live,  
He sees the hidden glory that shall be.

He sees the glory without spot or stain,  
The spiritual beauty all unpriced;  
And in His love He sends each stroke of pain  
To make us like our dear Lord Jesus Christ

O God of Love, give us calm, pitying eyes  
And sweetest patience. Let us also see  
The glory and the grace that underlies  
Each shapeless mass that waits a touch from Thee.

**O** HOLY, blessed, and glorious Lord, blessed forever in  
Thy patience and glorious in Thy meekness, we beseech  
Thee to render continual help to us Thy inconstant disciples,  
that we may learn to serve Thee in a patience and meekness  
like Thine own, in long-suffering and gentleness of heart, in  
kindness and charity towards others, in self-distrust and sub-  
mission towards Thee. Dispose us cheerfully and steadfastly  
to suffer all things for Thy sake, knowing that if we suffer  
patiently with Thee here, we shall reign with Thee in Thy  
glory forever. Grant this, O Christ, of Thy wonderful com-  
passion, and for Thy Love's sake. *Amen.*

## Fourth Thursday.

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So run that ye may obtain. Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air. But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection, lest that by any means when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.

Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall. But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; and they shall walk and not faint.

The just shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain.

THERE are some summer days which after a clear morning pass through a season of gloom. The sun hides itself behind a veil of cloud; depression falls on animals and plants. All things retire into themselves, as if defrauded by the morning brightness. The day itself seems to feel that it has not fulfilled



the prophecy of its dawning, and lies heavily upon the earth. But it is only for a time. Just as the manhood of the day has come, it conquers its early sullenness — the clouds disperse, the sun breaks out, the birds resume their song, a new youthfulness runs through the trees.

It is the image of one who, having in later youth passed through much trouble, and lost during it the use and joy and naturalness of youth, recovers these in the midst of manhood.

There are certain characters which in youth lose part of their youth. Something has stepped in which has spoilt life. Sorrow or overwork has taken the edge from enjoyment by taking away physical health; a gloomy home has repressed enthusiasm; a willful self-repression, born of religious asceticism, or of the demands of exacting friendship, has driven so deep the springs of natural feeling that with all their innate force they cannot rise to refresh the surface of the heart. Sometimes these characters never recover: the process has gone too far, and they will never taste of youth again till they go home to God. Sometimes they turn to fanaticism and become the curse of the earth; but God, who knows the weakness of men, will be just to them — victims of fate — and remember that they are but dust. Sometimes this repression, especially when inflicted by religious

parents, has its result in a reaction against the tyranny done in the name of God, and nature crushed in its natural breaks out in unnatural channels. The man becomes a blasphemer and a profligate. The woman flies into the dissipation of the world, or meets a sadder though often a less sinful fate — the easy victim of one of those men who make the murder of womanhood their vile trade and viler pleasure.

Now, what is it that they want? — for it is plain that the inevitable fault of such characters is the dissipation of thought, energy, and life. They want concentration of will towards a single and a noble aim; not such a concentration as will destroy their youthful feeling or injure their originality, — for the very fact of that originality in the midst of a world enslaved to customs is more than other men's work, — but a concentration which will leave their nature free, and yet make its freedom strong through the rule of law.

We seek this concentration in one aim after another. But there is always the chance of failure, and failure is followed by despondency, and despondency imprisons energy, and life is spoilt. Or the aim becomes stained with a mean or selfish motive, and we are then haunted with the sense of something radically wrong in us which strangles all en-

deavor, and so drift back into our aimless, roving life again.

We want an aim which never can grow vile, an aim which cannot disappoint our hope. There is but one on earth, and it is that of being like God. He who strives after union with the perfect Love must grow out of selfishness, and the nobility of the strife makes meanness impossible. And as to failure, failure is out of the question ; our success is secured in the omnipotent Holiness of God.

Concentrate, then, your will on this. Do not wish, but *will* to be at one with God.

Who dreams of God when passionate youth is nigh,  
When first life's weary waste his feet have trod —  
Who seeth angels' footfalls in the sky,  
Working the works of God ;

His sun shall fade as gently as it rose,  
Through the dark woof of death's approaching night;  
His faith shall shoot, at life's prophetic close,  
Some threads of golden light.

For him the silver ladder shall be set —  
His Saviour shall receive his latest breath —  
He walketh to a fadeless coronet,  
Up through the gate of death !

**A**RM us, O Lord, with Thy Spirit, encourage us with Thy presence ; and let us feel the effectual working of Thy power, which is ever made perfect through weakness ; that we

may live before Thee with clean hearts and undefiled bodies, and sanctified spirits. Send us strength from above, that we may retain our integrity, may resist the enemy, and stand steadfast in the day of trial. Be Thou our strong rock and castle of defense ; that, being preserved through Thy grace and assistance, we may continue Thy faithful soldiers and servants unto our life's end. Nourish all the seeds of grace that are sown in our hearts, and make them fruitful unto every good word and work. Give us the increase of faith, hope, charity, and all other Christian graces ; and that we may obtain that which Thou dost promise, make us ever to love that which Thou dost command ; and this we beg through the merits and for the sake of Thy dear Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

9

## Fourth Friday.

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This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.

Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

While we were yet sinners Christ died for us.

WE are told of self-sacrifice, that it is the law or moving power of Christ's kingdom ; it is certainly far from being the law of natural life, yet it seems to stir the heart, even as beauty moves the senses, infallibly, by touching the spring of some hidden sure affinity, lying deeper than the nature with which it seems at present to war. Nothing belonging to Christ's kingdom *tells* much upon the world which has not in it the element of sacrifice and of Christ-like willingness to participate in pain. A righteous man may effect much good, through beneficent deeds and wise and kind plans, for the benefit of others ; but it is to the *good* man, the man for whom some

peradventure would even dare to die, the man who himself, if need were, would die for men, that the hearts of men cleave.

When the saints are more perfectly joined to Christ than they can be in this present dispensation, we shall find that to be with Him in glory will be to be more imbued with His especial law of life. We shall then be able to help others more than is now possible. Our spirits, set free from the law of self in our members which resists the law of love, will be able to do and bear more for the world, so long as it still continues a suffering world, until the days when death shall be swallowed up in victory.

So much, even in the natural region, is often gained by contact with a soul at once stronger and purer than our own, that even the natural heart will claim its Saviour; it will desire one who has given Himself for it to restore it to purity and joy, it will ask for deliverance through one more mighty than itself, for communion with one who is more pure. Could its annals ever be written, they would tell not only of martyrdoms, of self-abnegation endured in the strength of merely human love, but also of miracles wrought out by its quickening, energizing power. How many lives deadened by failure and disappointment have been lifted into fresh vigor by the touch of a strong and friendly hand; how many depressed

and discouraged spirits has the warm breath of kindness floated into an atmosphere in which their own wings can expand, a sunshine which but for their blessed intervention they would have never reached. No wonder, then, that the heart of man should feel strangely yet sweetly at home in the region of spiritual intervention ; no wonder that expiation, and the giving up of life for life, that intercession for others, which is but the practical extension of the atonement, the pouring out of one human soul for another in prayer, even as Christ's soul was poured forth for the world in agony and death, should become the natural language of every heart whose highest energies divine grace has touched and kindled into life. Intercession is the mother-tongue of the whole family of Christ.

If no sin could be discovered  
In the pure and spotless Lord,  
If the cruel death He suffered  
Is sin's just and meet reward,  
Then it must have been for others  
That the Lord on Calvary bled,  
And the guilt have been a brother's,  
Which was laid upon His head.

And for whom hath He contended  
In a strife so strange and new ?  
And for whom to hell descended ?  
Brothers ! 't was for me and you !

Now you see that He was reaping  
Punishment for us alone ;  
And we have great cause for weeping,  
Not for His guilt, but our own.

**O** CHRIST, Son of God, who without sin wast delivered unto death, and caught in the snare of the hunters, grant that through Thine unmerited death the death which we merit may be overcome, that Thou, who, though innocent, wast given up for us, mayest through the gift of innocency make us to come at length in blessedness to Thee, who reignest with the Father and the Holy Ghost one God, world without end. *Amen.*



## Fourth Saturday.

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The other disciples said unto Thomas, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe.

And after eight days again His disciples were within, and Thomas with them. Then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst and said, Peace be unto you. Then saith He to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand and thrust it into my side; and be not faithless but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto Him, My Lord, and my God! Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me thou hast believed. Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed!

A STORY is told in the life of Saint Louis of France, how a great master in theology once came to Bishop William of Paris and begged to speak to him. And when the master was about to speak he began to weep very bitterly; so the Bishop said to him, "Do not be down-hearted, for no one can sin so much that God cannot forgive yet more."

The master then explained that he was miserable and no better than an infidel, because he could not bring himself to believe in the gracious doctrine of the Sacrament of the Supper. "Master," said the Bishop, "tell me, when the enemy sends you this temptation, is it pleasing to you?" To which the master made answer: "Sir, on the contrary, it annoys me as much as anything can annoy me." "Now, I ask you," continued the Bishop, "would you accept gold or silver on condition that you should utter with your lips something against the Sacrament of the Supper?" "I, sir!" exclaimed the master. "Know that there is nothing in the world that I would accept on that condition. I would rather that they tore all my limbs out of my body than say anything of the kind." "I will now say something else to you," the Bishop observed. "You are aware that the King of France is at war with the King of England; and you are also aware that the castle which is nearest to the frontier between the two is La Rochelle, in Poitou. I will therefore ask you one question: if the King had intrusted you with the custody of La Rochelle, which is on the frontier, and had consigned to me the keeping of the castle of Laon, which is in the heart of France, and in a land at peace, to whom ought the King to be most grateful at the end of his war — to you, who had

guarded La Rochelle without losing it, or to me, who had guarded Laon?" "In Heaven's name, sir," cried the master, "it would be to me, who had guarded La Rochelle without losing it." "Master," resumed the Bishop, "I tell you that my heart is like the castle of Laon, for I have no temptation or doubt touching the Sacrament of the Supper. Wherefore I say to you that for once God is pleased with me because I believe steadfastly and in peace; He is pleased four times with you, because you keep your heart for Him in the war of tribulation, and have such good-will towards Him that for no earthly good, nor for any hurt that could be done to your body, would you forsake Him. I tell you, therefore, to be quite at your ease, for that your state under these circumstances is more pleasing to our Lord than my own."

When the master heard that, he knelt down before the Bishop, and gave humble thanks to God.

There are two twilights unto every day —  
Twilight of dawn and twilight of decay.  
And likewise thus we find  
Two twilights in the thinking of mankind —  
The twilight of a seeking unto light,  
The twilight of a doubting unto night.

There are two stones we may not dare to cast:  
The stone of stumbling in our brother's way

The stone of judgment at our brother's past —  
We who like sheep have gone astray.

Lord, I unto this Sacrament draw near,  
In humble confidence and heartfelt fear.  
Fear of myself, and humble hope in Thee,  
"O God, my God, be merciful to me."  
And when I eat this bread and drink this wine,  
Fill me with charity and peace like Thine!

**D**EFEND us, O most gracious God, from dishonoring Thee and our religion, by distrusting Thy goodness, and calling Thy loving kindness in question towards those who are sincerely bent to please Thee. Remove all troublesome imaginations from us, and give us a clear understanding of Thee and of ourselves. Or, when we are in darkness and confusion of thoughts, grant us so much light and judgment, as not to conclude ourselves forsaken by Thee, but to reflect upon thy long-continued favors, and many deliverances; that so we may resolve still to hope in Thee, to bear our present troubles patiently, and to resign our will absolutely to Thy good pleasure. And, O good Lord, enable us to look beyond these clouds, to that blessed state whither our Saviour is gone, in which there is no darkness at all, and in a humble hope of coming to the same place where He is, to content ourselves with any condition whilst we are here so far remote from that region of light and glory. Let us always approach Thy altar with fervent and heavenly affections, and with firm resolutions of better obedience. Let us commemorate the mysteries of our redemption with profound humility, with exalted thoughts of Thy wonderful goodness, and with thankful acknowledgments of Thy great love, demonstrated to the sons of men.

Let the mortified lives of Thy saints raise us above the pleasures of sense; and let the pattern of their piety and devotion, their humility and charity, their meekness and patient sufferings, be always so imprinted upon our minds that we may transcribe their examples in our life and conversation; that thus observing the days of rest and refreshment here below, we may celebrate an eternal rest with Thee hereafter in Thy heavenly kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

## Fourth Sunday.

### MID-LENT OR REFECTION SUNDAY.

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The angel of the Lord came again the second time, and touched him saying, Arise and eat, because the journey is too great for thee.

THIS is God's rule with regard to comfort in all troubles: and it is especially His rule in that great work of true repentance, the work of this holy season. There is no more common feeling, among persons trying in earnest to serve God better than they have done, than a sort of dull, heavy dread of the irksomeness and gloom of a penitential life. To acknowledge our faults and have our sins ever before us; to pray without ceasing; to judge, condemn, punish ourselves, that we be not judged of the Lord; to humble ourselves, if need be, before God's servants as well as before Him; to keep our eyes, tongues, appetites, in order; to say prayers on our knees often and punctually, and always with real efforts to attend; to deny ourselves pleasures; to be afraid of speaking

about others ; to be meek and calm in interruption, disappointment, ill-usage ; to grudge one's self-enjoyment, and watch for ways of self-denial ; all these are necessary parts, signs, and tokens of real Christian repentance ; and of course, to look forward to a whole life so spent must in itself be a disheartening and dreary thought ; somewhat in the same kind of way, as it is disheartening and dreary to a sick person, when the physician tells him he must live by rule, watch himself in his diet, and exercise, not take liberties nor please himself as he used to do. Of course, men had rather have their liberty ; yet if they have faith in the physician, they obey his directions ; they put up with some degree of hardness, rather than cast their health away. And mark the consequence : it very generally happens, that the very self-denial by habit becomes tolerable and easy to them ; besides its benefit to their health, which they do not always feel, it brings with it comforts and advantages which they do feel. So, and much more when Christians try to obey Christ because they have faith in Him, and embrace a life of contrition and self-denial, rather than cast their souls away. It seems indeed dreary beforehand ; how should it be otherwise ? but that is the trial of their faith. If they truly believe in Christ, the Healer of souls, if they truly long for health in their own sick

souls, much more if they have any touch of love to Him who bore all for them, they will not shrink from the remedy because it seems harsh and bitter, they will embrace the cross boldly and make up their minds both to the heavy burden of it, and the sharp anguish ; and having done so they will find to their amazement a heavenly sweetness mingled in the bitter cup ; ten thousand refreshments which they knew not of will help them along the journey which they undertake in faith, knowing it to be too great for them. Refreshment will come, if you do not look for it, if you put away the thought of it from your mind, if you keep saying to yourself it is not meet for such as I am ; I am quite unworthy of it. But if you depend on it, and are vexed at its not coming, that is a bad sign of the truth of your repentance and looks as if you wanted rather to be comfortable and easy, than to please God. So far as it goes, it is making your own choice, not leaving your Lord to choose for you. It is taking the matter out of His hands into your own.

Oh why should I have peace ?

Why ? but for that unchanged, undying love  
Which would not, could not, cease,  
Until it make me heir of joy above.

Yes, but for pardoning grace,  
I feel I never should in glory see



The brightness of that Face  
That once was pale and agonized for me.

Let the birds seek their nest,  
Foxes their holes, and man his peaceful bed ;  
Come, Saviour, in my breast,  
Deign to repose Thine oft-rejected Head !

Come ! give me rest, and take  
The only rest on earth Thou lovest, within  
A heart, that for Thy sake  
Lies bleeding, broken, penitent for sin.

**O** MERCIFUL God, by whose Fatherly love we are helped in our infirmities, take us under the shadow of Thy wings, guard us against our spritual enemies, and let not any evil thing approach to hurt us. In the darkness of our way on the earth show us often the light of Thy countenance. If Thou makest Thy faithful people sorrowful awhile, make them joyful again with comfortable assurance of Thy favor, and refresh them with the consolations of Thy Spirit. Send angels of strength and peace from Thy right hand, lest the length and burden of the way should be too great for us. O Lord, lift up Thy countenance upon us ! Make Thy face to shine upon us ! Give times of rest to our bodies, and perpetual peace to our souls, through Him who died for our reconciliation, and left us the promise of rest and peace everlasting, Thy Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

## Fourth Monday.

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And it came to pass that He went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.

The Lord is with you while ye be with Him.

They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.

Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. God answereth him in the joy of his heart.

Pray without ceasing.

IN nothing, perhaps, is the Christian's progress in holiness more signally manifest than in his prayers. They become more and more the natural expression of the new life. At first, prayer is either a part of the exercise of religious obedience or else the indispensable means of obtaining some desired benefit. Accordingly, persons immature in faith and love have a great deal of difficulty with their prayers. No complaint is oftener poured into the ears of spiritual pastors and teachers than that of unsatisfactory devotions. It takes different forms. Sometimes the heart is cold; the hour of daily retirement is unwelcome; the closet has no attractions; the words are

nothing but words ; the whole transaction is a dead form, or even a mockery. At other times the disappointment is that the special petitions are apparently not answered. Again and again the cry goes up, and no evident sign is given of a hearing God. The request is not granted ; the bad habit is not broken , temptation does not die ; doubt is not removed ; the favor sought is not bestowed ; the comfort is not felt, and it is questioned whether the Comforter Himself draws near ; it is as if the supplication were driven back from a shut up heaven and fell like a leaden weight upon the breast. The baffled suppliant keeps on entreating, rather because the letter of the command is plain, or because he knows it must somehow be well for him to be on his knees before his Maker, than because he is refreshed.

But with the increase of the inner life these sources of misery disappear ; or, if they are afterward re-opened, the distress is short-lived, being generally due to some temporary disorder of the inward man. Christ being more completely formed within, the believer's seasons of communion with the Father spread themselves more widely through his days and nights. He passes very frequently, almost unconsciously, and by imperceptible gradations of feeling, from his ordinary existence among the things of this world into direct converse with that Friend who is

ever nearest, while also most high and most mighty. The current of adoring thought flows on in joyous, satisfying concord with the Eternal Will. We do not stop, perhaps, to shape every aspiration into articulate speech, but we yield to the Divine breath, and move whithersoever the Spirit that maketh intercession moves. In such measure as may be, the disciple is in the Mount with the Master. Those wonderful words of the Communion Office are realized, "That we may evermore dwell in Him, and He in us." As the Lord Himself sometimes, to the very last, offered up particular entreaties, so it will daily be with His most spiritually-minded followers. But the communion will not end with these. A larger and larger share of devotion will consist in thanksgiving and praise,—a sure mark of spiritual growth. Some new blessing,—a victory of faith, a fresh beam of light falling from heaven on the path,—will as often stir the soul to its heavenly conversation as a trial, loss, or throb of pain. There will be no anxious concern about answers, for the felt blessedness of the act is itself an answer. There is no doubt that God will hear, because it is known that He listened before his child called. May not something like this be the meaning of the prayer that is "without ceasing?" It is as Mr. Coleridge strikingly said, the loftiest action of the spirit of

man. It is hiding in the pavilion of the Most High,  
and resting under the shadow of His wings.

Lord, it is hard to stand  
Waiting and watching in this silent toil,  
While other fishers draw their nets to land,  
And shout to see their spoil.

My strength fails unawares,  
My hands are weak, my sight grows dim with tears;  
My soul is burdened with unanswered prayers,  
And sick of doubts and fears.

But lo! what form is this,  
Standing beside me on the desolate shore?  
I bow my knees; His garment's hem I kiss;  
Master, I doubt no more!

"Draw in thy net, draw in,"  
He cries, "behold the straining meshes break!"  
Ah, Lord, the store I toiled so long to win  
Is granted for Thy sake!

The rosy day blooms out  
Like a full-blossomed flower; the joyous sea  
Lifts up its voice; the winds of morning shout  
All glory, Lord, to Thee!

**A**LMIGHTY and everlasting God, from whom cometh  
every perfect gift, graciously accept this humble tribute  
of praise and thanksgiving, and mercifully grant, that the  
frequent meditation of Thine infinite goodness may constrain  
our hearts to love Thee gladly above all things, and the serious

consideration of Thy incomprehensible Majesty bring our understandings in joyful subjection to the obedience of faith; that we may here, in reverence to Thy word, believe what we do not see, and hereafter in the blissful vision of Thy glory see more than we now believe, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour, who with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever liveth and reigneth one God, world without end. *Amen.*

## Fourth Tuesday.

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If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering.

If ye then being evil know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask Him.

What things soever ye desire when ye pray, believe that ye receive them and ye shall have them.

THE promise of understanding is to prayer ; they who ask of God shall receive spiritual wisdom. No wonder if those who neglect to ask, however sharp and knowing they may be in other things, remain as children, without sense or discretion in their judgment of what relates to God's kingdom. Many great scholars have fallen into grievous errors, in spite of their shrewdness and industry, for this simple reason, that they were not devout, they did not in earnest ask God's blessing on their labors. But do not imagine that great scholars only are likely to go wrong in that way. Every man has his own soul to save,

and has need to be a scholar in the Scriptures, so far as knowing the way to save it. But if he set about this study, either reading or hearing the gospel, in a proud, conceited, self-sufficient way, then, the quicker he is in natural understanding, and the more diligent he is to learn, and the more leisure he enjoys, the farther he is likely to go wrong in his notions of the meaning of Scripture. For, depending on himself, he will not ask of God ; and not asking, he will not obtain. When I say he will not ask, I do not suppose that any person imagining himself to be a Christian entirely neglects prayer to God. But I mean that he will not ask earnestly ; he will not pray from his very heart. That is, in God's sight, he will not pray ; for God looks on the very heart, and judges by what He finds there.

It would be well to bear this in mind when we are looking at those portions of the Gospel which promise everything to faith and prayer. For example, where our Saviour tells His disciples, " What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." This it is likely may have startled many. For who, it may be said, ever received all the blessings he prayed for ? But this is answered by asking again, Who ever when he prayed, believed that he received what he asked for in the full meaning of our Saviour's words ?



For by such belief it should seem that He meant such a faith as St. James describes: full trust in Him, and entire submission to His holy will. Any person so minded, any person thoroughly willing to let God choose for Him, would in reality always believe that he receives of God what he prays for. For he would be more sure of God's love and disposition to do the very best for him, than of his own love for himself. Suppose, then, he prays for any worldly comfort, for his own health, or for the health or life of a dear friend. It will all the while be strong upon his mind, that God only is able to judge whether this if granted would prove such a blessing and comfort as one naturally imagines. Therefore, how earnestly soever a thoroughly Christian devout soul may feel and utter any particular wish, it will always be tempered with this conviction deeply rooted in his heart, that, however God may appear to deny him, He will in fact grant the blessing he asks for; and if not in the very form and manner in which He asks for it, yet still the same blessing will come somehow, he is quite sure, in a way which God knows to be better.

Our Saviour's words, then, may perhaps not improperly be thought to mean as if He said, All things whatsoever ye desire when ye pray, ye desire supposing them to be really best for you. Now then, make

up your minds to this, that God loves you so well as never to deny you what is really best for you, except by your own fault. Make up your minds to this in earnest and you will be as sure, when you kneel down, to have the meaning of your prayers granted, as a good child is when asking a favor of a wise and kind parent. Nay, you will be as much more certain of it, as God is wiser and more kind than the wisest or kindest parent.

Such seems to be the meaning of our Saviour's promise, in regard of all our prayers generally ; and St. James's words are the same promise in regard particularly of spiritual wisdom. Of that as of all other blessings, it is quite certain, by God's word, that whoever comes to ask for it with a heart thoroughly resigned and contented, that is, in other words, with a faithful heart, that man shall receive what he asks.

The prayer, how weak  
O Lord, that lifts my heart to Thee.  
But this I seek —  
This one thing give to me —  
Help my infirmity ;  
Within me speak,  
And by the Spirit taught  
I shall know what to pray for as I ought.

From pain and care,  
O Lord! I seek not to be free.  
But this my prayer —  
Open my eyes to see  
That Thou art leading me,  
Then I can bear  
To walk in darkness still,  
Walking with Thee, submissive to Thy will.

**O** LORD, I know not what I should ask of Thee. Thou only knowest what I want ; and Thou lovest me, if I am Thy friend, better than I can love myself. O Lord, give to me, Thy child, what is best, whatsoever it may be. I dare not ask either crosses or comforts. I only present myself before Thee. I open my heart to Thee. Behold my wants, which I myself am ignorant of ; but do Thou behold, and do according to Thy mercy. Smite, or heal ! Depress me, or raise me up. I adore all Thy purposes without knowing them. I am silent ; I offer myself in sacrifice. I abandon myself to Thee. I have no more any desire but to accomplish Thy will. Lord, teach me how to pray ! Dwell Thou Thyself in me by Thy Holy Spirit. *Amen.*

## Fifth Wednesday.

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The watchmen that go about the city found me : to whom I said, Saw ye Him whom my soul loveth? It was but a little that I passed from them, but I found Him whom my soul loveth. I held Him, and would not let Him go.

God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth IN HIM should not perish.

Jesus said, He that believeth in me, though he were dead yet shall he live.

Believe in ME.

CHRIST does not merely say to us, Believe this, that, and the other thing about Me ; put your credence in this and the other doctrine ; accept this and the other promise ; hope for this and the other future thing. All these come with but are not the central act. He says, "Believe: believe in Me! I am the way, and the truth, and the life ; He that cometh to *Me* shall never hunger, and he that believeth in *Me* shall never thirst." Do we rightly appreciate that? The whole feeling and attitude of a man's mind is different, according as he is trusting a person, or according as he is believing something about

a person. And this, therefore, is the first broad truth that lies here. Faith has reference not merely to a doctrine, not to a system ; but deeper than all these, to a living Lord — “ faith that is *in Me*.’

It is a relation which is expressed not more clearly but perhaps a little more forcibly to us by substituting another word, and saying, Faith is *trust*.

It is the very same kind of feeling, though different in degree, and glorified by the majesty and glory of its object, as that which we all know how to put forth in our relations with one another. We trust each other. That is faith. We have confidence in the love that has been around us, breathing benedictions and bringing blessings ever since we were little children. When the child looks up into the mother’s face, the symbol to it of all protection, — or into the father’s eye, the symbol to it of all authority, — that emotion is the same as the one which, glorified and made divine, rises strong and immortal in its power, when fixed and fastened on Christ, and saves the soul. The Gospel rests upon a mystery, but the practical part of it is no mystery.

And then, if this personal trust in Christ as our living Redeemer, — if this be faith, then there come also, closely connected with it, certain other emotions or feelings in the heart. For instance, if I am trusting to Christ, there is inseparably linked with it self-

distrust. There are two sides to the thought ; where there is reliance upon another, there must needs be non-reliance upon self. There is the tree : the trunk goes upward from the little seed, rises into the light, gets the sunshine upon it, and has leaves and fruit. That is the upward tendency of faith, — trust in Christ. There is the root, down deep, buried, dark, unseen. Both are springing, but springing in opposite directions, from the one seed. And again, faith, as thus conceived of, will obviously have for its certain and immediate consequence, love. Nay, the two emotions will be inseparable, and practically co-existent. In thought we can separate them. Logically, faith comes first, and love next, but in life they will spring up together. The question of their order of existence is an often-trod battle-ground of theology, all strewed with the relics of former fights. But in the real history of the growth of religious emotions in the soul the interval which separates them is impalpable, and in every act of trust love is present, and fundamental to every emotion of love to Christ is trust in Christ.

“We are justified,” says the Bible, “by faith.” If a man believes, he is saved. Why so ? Not as some people sometimes seem to fancy, — not as if in faith itself there was any merit. What difference is there between what a man does with his hands and

what a man feels in his heart? If the one merit salvation, or if the other merit salvation, equally we are shut up to this, — Men get heaven by what they do; and it does not matter a bit what they do it with, whether it be body or soul. When we say we are saved by faith, we mean, accurately, *through* faith. It is God that saves. It is Christ's life, Christ's blood, Christ's sacrifice, Christ's intercession, that saves. Faith is simply the channel through which there flows over into my emptiness the Divine fullness; or, to use the good old illustration, it is the hand which is held up to receive the benefit which Christ lays in it. A living trust in Jesus has power unto salvation, only because it is the means by which the power of God unto salvation may come into my heart. It is not faith that saves us; it is Christ that saves us, and saves us through faith.

And now, take this one conviction into your hearts, That what makes a man a Christian; what saves my soul and yours; what brings the love of Christ into my life, and makes the sacrifice of Christ a power to pardon and purify, — that that is not merely believing this Book, not merely understanding the doctrines that are there, but a far more profound thing than that. It is the casting of myself upon Himself, the bending of my willing heart to His loving Spirit; the close contact, heart to heart,

soul to soul, will to will, of my emptiness with His fullness, of my sinfulness with His righteousness, of my death with His life : that I may live by Him, be sanctified by Him, be saved by Him “ with an everlasting salvation.”

My faith to try, in which I much did glory,  
I said unto a mountain dark and hoary,  
“ Be thou removed and cast into the sea,”  
And watched to see it spread its wings and flee,  
With movement swifter than the flight of bird;  
But watched in vain:  
The mountain did remain.  
“ It needed but a grain  
Of faith. And surely I possess, indeed,  
More than the simple grain of mustard-seed.”  
When lo! a voice I heard —  
“ Thy faith is in thy faith, not in His name  
Through whom alone such power man dare claim.”  
I named the Name of Christ, and now  
The mountain, shaken to its depths, bowed low,  
Then rose majestic with its crown of snow,  
And floated seaward through the western air:  
Oh! with what awe  
Its ocean death amid the waves I saw;  
Then kneeling did adore;  
But while I did rejoice,  
The angel spake once more  
With warning voice,  
“ Great is the faith that mountains can remove,  
But greater still is that which works by love.”



**O** SON of God, whom to know aright is life eternal, grant us the hearts of little children, and such trust in Thy life of sacrifice and Thy death of reconciliation, that our faith in Thy sight may never be reprov'd. We believe; help Thou our unbelief. Overcome for us the power of fear and sin and death, that, being conquerors in Thee and more than conquerors, we may enter into the Kingdom of Thy Peace, and be forever with Thee whom our souls love, Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

## Fifth Thursday.

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O Lord God, I pray Thee, send me good speed this day.

Take no thought for the morrow, for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself.

He that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack.

Jesus, therefore, being wearied with His journey, sat thus on the well.

He said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of. My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me, and to finish His work.

How can we be made like unto Jesus? How can our poor, irksome sufferings, of cold or hunger, or poor fare, or aching of limbs, or stiffness of our joints, or sleeplessness, or weariness, how can they be hallowed to us, how can they be borne so as to make us like our Lord? First, many of these sufferings our good Lord took in order to hallow them to us, to give them a worth and a joy, painful as they are, because they were His. Was He not weary by the well, and a hungered after His temptation, and were

not His knees stiffened on the Cross, and His limbs out of joint? Was He not chilled with the dew of heaven as He passed whole nights in the mountain or in the garden in prayer for us? and was not He who feeds all creation fed by the barley-loaves, the gift of His creatures to His poverty?

But then, how did He hallow them? By enduring them as the will of God. "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me." He "became obedient unto death, and that the death of the Cross."

And so for us. It is matter of faith that everything, what seems to us the greatest and the least, is ordained or overruled by God. What is good He gives; what is evil He overrules to the good of His own. To God nothing can be great; as to us nothing is little, which in any way affects our souls. To God, the fall of empires, the crash of the world, the dissolving of the whole universe were as nothing. By His Word they were created; at His breath they would pass away. More precious to Him than the whole world is the value of one single soul. For the world shall perish, the soul endureth. The world and all its wondrous beauty is but the work of His hands; the soul made and re-made in the Image of God was redeemed by the Blood of Christ. It were more reasonable to think that God had not made man at all, than to think that He had set him in the

midst of this His Creation, and left him the mere sport of chance, or of rude, unbending laws, and did not order every, the least, thing concerning him for the well-being of his soul. We often think of God as too like ourselves. To us, it is a trouble and a weariness, to look into little things, to attend particularly to this or that. And so men picture to themselves Almighty God as having made certain great laws of our world ; but they cannot bring home to themselves, that every, the very least, accident of every day is known, willed, overruled, by Almighty God. If they ventured to put their thoughts into words, they would think it a trouble to Almighty God to attend to all the little details of our daily life. As though God were like ourselves, beholding with effort things one by one, giving His mind (so to say), now to one thing, now to another, or, as though having set this world in motion like a great machine, He put it in its own head to govern itself, and did not weary Himself about it ! Rather, Almighty God, not being divided and not having parts and a bounded mind, as we, sees all at once, past, present, and to come ; all things which to us have been, or are, or shall be, or all things which could be ; all things which He has made, or all of which, if He willed, He could make ; all which He shall make, and the whole history of every creature of His,

spread out before Him, as in the mirror of His Infinite Mind, present there. Unchanging, He changeth all things; in perfect rest He endureth all things. By His will He made them; by His will He upholds all which is upheld, and leaves to decay whatever decays. Everything, at every moment of time, is seen in the perfect stillness of His Infinite Mind, and is ruled and overruled by His Infinite Will. He so "upholdeth all things by the Word of His Power," that our Lord saith, "not a sparrow falleth to the ground without My Father." "The hairs of your head are all numbered."

Our Lord teaches us, as to those very little things, in order that we may know and feel that nothing is too little to be ordered by our Father, nothing too little in which to see His Hand, nothing, which touches our souls, too little to accept from Him, nothing too little to be done to Him. Since the hairs of our heads are all numbered, so is every throb or shoot of pain, every beating of the heart. Every tear which starts is seen, and if wept to Him is gathered up by Him. Every heart's sigh He hears at once from every bosom in His whole creation. He, who is in the highest Heaven and filleth all things, but is contained in none, is present to each single heart, and, if the heart form its wish to Him He hearkens.

*"Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this day without sin."*

Yes, for this one, one day,  
Low at Thy feet I pray,  
Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep me without sin .  
Perchance another morrow  
New prayers my soul may borrow;  
Upon another shore her life begin !

But for these few short hours,  
In sunshine or in showers,  
I care not, so Thine own dear hand doth lead, —  
Choose Thou for me my way,  
Oh, do not let me stray !  
Within Thy heavenly meadows may I feed.

So when my day hath fled,  
And I shall rest my head  
Like some blest, happy child kissed into sleep ;  
Thou wilt look down on me,  
And fondly smile to see  
Sin hath not made the tired eyes to weep.

And if, with this day's close,  
My soul shall find repose,  
The sealed eyes never open more on earth again,  
Oh, purer, happier morrow !  
No trace of the old sorrow,  
No need to pray, " Lord, keep me without sin ! "

O THOU, who on the earth didst hunger and thirst in  
the body for our sake, who didst make it Thy meat to  
do the Father's will, and who feedest the heart that trusteth

and followeth Thee with the same heavenly food, grant unto us, we beseech Thee, such a perfect trust in Thy Hand that we may follow Thee without delay, and without wandering aside, or falling away. Keep us this day without sin, and day by day replenish us with Thy grace, and all the days of our life preserve us in Thy faith and fear, for Thy mercy's sake, our Mediator and Saviour. *Amen.*

## Fifth Friday.

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Like as the hart desireth the water-brooks, so longeth my soul after Thee, O God.

My soul is athirst for God, yea, even for the living God.

Why art thou so full of heaviness, O my soul? and why art thou so disquieted within me? Put thy trust in God; for I will yet give Him thanks for the help of His countenance. One deep calleth another, because of the noise of the water-pipes: all Thy waves and storms are gone over me.

A SHALLOW view of life rejects the Cross, just as a shallow theology rejects it, but it is in alliance with all our deepest experiences, whether in the spiritual or natural order. It is not only in Genesis that the fall of man is written, not only by the pen of the blessed Evangelists that his recovery is proclaimed. Let us look where we will, either in the past or present, we shall see Humanity ensnared, enslaved, degraded; also, we shall see in human nature, *simply as it is*, a New Testament, the elements of a better resurrection. How wonderful, even in the least excellent of human beings, are the latent possibilities of good!



What gleams do we find among low and degraded natures of an excellence only able to reveal and maintain itself in a momentary flash, like that which Homer says is apt to prelude death, yet proving through that very flash its own deep hidden life. It is evident that man's wound is curable ; he is a being at once needing to be restored, and capable of being so. In the depths of our mortal nature lies a dark unsunned well, too deep sunk for the events of common life to stir and touch it, the waters of which when troubled reflect the Cross, and prepare man's heart for the cardinal doctrine of Christianity, *i. e.* deliverance through a work not his own. Life's deepest moments rouse man from the lethargy which its ordinary course weaves round him, and bid him listen for the footstep of Reuben coming to release him, where he lies tied and bound, and incapable of effort, at the bottom of the pit, "wherein is no water."

Our best and our worst grow very close together ; and the heart of man, out of its poverty, and out of its wealth alike, when he has once learnt either the depth or extent of either, will testify to him of his need of a Saviour. It will show him a dark, secret inherency of evil, a stern outward bondage of circumstance, a "siege perilous" forever going on against a principle of goodness, also latent in our

nature, — yet, without a superadded energy, too weak for ultimate victory. It is not in the heart itself, that the heart, be it the truest and kindest that ever was fashioned by God — can trust in the fierce assaults of temptation. Neither will it turn to the world ; Egypt, that broken reed, hollow, frail, and deceiving, that has never failed to pierce to the very heart him who has leaned upon it in the hour of need. Man, in the extremity of conflict, is thrown back upon his God ; and I would say again, that nature itself, when taken at its highest note, whether of ecstasy or anguish, will respond to the very chords that, at a lower pitch of feeling, seem most utterly jarring and dissonant with its loud, continual chorus, — sacrifice, intervention, substitution. These ideas are not foreign to the heart that warmly loves or deeply suffers. “ He that loves,” as says St. Chrysostom, “ if it be not God, but man,” will at any rate understand us when we use them ; for if he who loves not knows not God, there is yet another thing which I will venture to affirm him ignorant of, and that is the excellence of which his own spirit is capable. Any one who has truly loved another human being knows that there is no conceivable amount of misery and degradation that he would not, if it were possible, bear for that person, or share with him, even with joy ; and if we once suppose

the heart's scope to be widened, and its aim fixed on a higher end, why should not Love be content to suffer for any person, why not for every one ?

When across the heart deep waves of sorrow  
Break, as on a dry and barren shore;  
When Hope glistens with no bright to-morrow,  
And the storm seems sweeping evermore;

Who shall hush the weary spirit's chiding,  
Who the aching void within shall fill ?  
Who shall whisper of a Peace abiding,  
And each surging billow calmly still ?

Only He whose wounded Heart was broken  
With the bitter Cross and thorny Crown,  
Whose dear love glad words of joy had spoken,  
Who His life for us laid meekly down.

**O** THOU who in Thine humiliation didst command the winds and waves, and they obeyed Thee, do Thou so dwell within us that we may be safe from all dangers and steadfast in all temptations. O Lord, Thou alone canst cast out the evil passions and desires of the soul. Come among us, we pray Thee, and with Thy great might succor us: subdue our spiritual enemies, and set us free from the tyranny of our besetting sins. Blessed Jesus, we are weary and heavy laden, and we come to Thee to give us rest. We would take Thy yoke upon us; we would sit at Thy feet and learn of Thee; and find rest unto our souls. For Thy yoke is easy, and thy burden is light. *Amen.*

## Fifth Saturday.

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Lo, these are parts of His ways: but how little a portion is heard of Him? but the thunder of His power who can understand?

Behold we count them happy which endure.

THE question which obtrudes itself on the mind as to the reason of God's remedying evil instead of preventing it, can never, with our limited faculties, receive an answer completely satisfactory. It becomes us to speak with caution and reverence on so arduous a subject, as those, who may indeed, through prayer and meditation, obtain glimpses, but never a full and perfect insight into the mystery. It seems probable that for the full apprehension and appreciation of Divine goodness by finite minds, it may have been necessary to present the contrast of guilt, misery, and ruin. The allowance in the universe of something antagonistic to God may have been essential, not indeed to the perfection of the Divine character, but to our appreciation of that perfection. The contrast of a dark ground brings out a bright

color to the eye. And in the absence of the dark ground the bright color would not appear so vivid. Let me take a more detailed illustration from nature. We think little of the sunlight on a summer day, when it pours around us the warm and golden flood, in which the little insect disports itself; the light is the medium of our seeing other objects, but itself stirs not our admiration. But let the sun's rays shine out against the inky thunder-cloud, and form the seven-hued arch of light, the sign of the covenant which secures the earth against a second deluge. The contrast brings out to our eyes the beauty; we apprehend, — we gaze with admiration upon the prismatic colors, melting one into another by such fine gradations. These colors really inhere in the light which is all around us. But the refraction from the drops of the thunder-cloud is essential to their manifestation. So it may be possibly with our mental apprehension of His character, respecting whom it is testified that "He is Light." In order that this character may display to a finite mind all its intrinsic perfections of compassion, love, tenderness, holiness, truth, justice, — it may be essential that evil should form a background for them and a field for their operation, — that they should be refracted, if I may so speak, from misery, degradation, and ruin.

The allowed entrance of evil may have had reference to the perfecting of human nature, as well as to the glorification of God. It was finely said of the ancient tragedy, whose constant theme was a hero in misfortune, that the gods approved the spectacle of a good man struggling with adversity. And doubtless it *is* a noble spectacle. A man surrounded with evil — inhaling an atmosphere of evil with his very breath of life — made the prey of calamity and the sport of temptation — and yet battling still, and surmounting all, in the faith of the invisible, — troubled on every side, yet not distressed ; perplexed, but not in despair, persecuted, but not forsaken ; cast down, but not destroyed — like a valiant swimmer, always rearing his head above the surge just when we thought it had finally overwhelmed him — made perfect, as the Apostle has it, through sufferings — lifted up, Joseph-like, from the dungeon of this world, to sit upon the throne — grappling with pain and sin and error and death, and coming off more than conqueror over them all, — is there not here something intrinsically nobler than in an Adam of Paradise, a creature spotless indeed, and holy, but ignorant of evil and so untutored by the manifold disciplines of evil ? May not tribulation perchance be a condition essential to the perfecting of our nature — to the elaborating of it into a vessel of

honor, meet for the Master's service? But tribulation could not have entered where there was no sin. It would there have found no rest for the sole of its foot.

Summer days

And moonlight nights He led us over paths  
Bordered with pleasant flowers; but when His steps  
Were on the mighty waters, — when we went  
With trembling hearts through nights of pain and loss, —  
His smile was sweeter and His love more dear;  
And only Heaven is better than to walk  
With Christ at midnight over moonless seas.

O ETERNAL and blessed and glorious One, who seest the end from the beginning; but who, for our safety and our sheltering, dost cover us with a merciful veil, and suffer us to see but parts of Thy wonderful ways, make us submissive to Thy will while we adore Thy mysteries. Humble the pride of our understanding, and preserve our hearts within us from all profane discontents with Thine appointments. And inasmuch as Thou bringest good out of evil, and light out of darkness, and dost nourish strength in the souls of those who patiently endure pain and loss and suffering at Thy righteous Hand, dispose us to an humble and thankful use of all Thy dealings with us, even of those which are darkest to our mortal sight, and so to glorify Thy holy name, through Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

## Fifth Sunday.

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Your joy no man taketh from you.

Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines ; the labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat ; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stall :

Yet will I rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.

To cherish brightness in the inward life is a duty that results from the union of the soul with the Blessed Spirit. The Spirit of God dwells in a radiance and a glory, bright beyond all thought. It is His everlasting dwelling-place ; the atmosphere ever surrounding His presence. It is remarkable with what earnestness and frequency St. Paul enjoins a spirit of rejoicing, as an essential part of a spiritual life ; and his words prove that this injunction is intimately connected with the indwelling of the Blessed Spirit. He represents "joy" as one of the fruits of the Spirit, following next in order to "love." Again, the Spirit of glory is spoken of as synonymous with the Spirit of God, — "the Spirit of glory and of God



resteth upon you," — and glory is the excess of joyous light. The necessity of this outflowing of the Spirit is most strongly pressed upon us: "Rejoice always, and again I say, rejoice."

Moreover, as a bright joy is the proper result of the presence of the Spirit, so is it a direct aid to the attainment of virtue. There is an instructive lesson in the incident recorded of Elisha, that once he needed a minstrel with his instrument of music to allay his perturbed soul, before "the Hand of the Lord" could come upon him, and his lips utter the voice of prophecy. It teaches the momentous truth, that an unclouded peace, a harmony of thought in communion with God, which is the secret of spiritual joy, is the true condition for receiving His inward illuminations.

It is not to be supposed that brightness is inconsistent with sorrow, or even with deep remorse of conscience. It is compatible with all states of spiritual life, however feeble, however burdened. Wherever the Spirit of God dwells there must needs be an inward shining of the holy light though hidden from the outward eye, hidden it may be even from the consciousness of the soul itself, troubled and darkened by the passing cloud. A secret radiance may be within the depth of the spirit to shine out again when the storm is overpast. Only sin, or unfaithful-

ness to the voice of conscience, or slothful decline from grace, of necessity forfeits this blessed witness of the presence of the Eternal Spirit. It may be dimmed or overcast by the will of God, as a chastisement, or discipline, teaching its own needful lessons of humility and trust and patient endurance. But we should ever pray for the continuance or renewal of joy. Rejoicing is a grace to be earnestly cherished, as well as a promised blessing; a duty to be steadily fulfilled, as well as a part of our blessed inheritance. We are expected to "hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end."

Rejoice in Christ alway ;

When earth looks heavenly bright,  
When joy makes glad the livelong day,  
And peace shuts in the night.

Rejoice, when care and woe

The fainting soul oppress,  
When tears at wakeful midnight flow,  
And morn brings heaviness.

Rejoice, in hope and fear ;

Rejoice, in life and death ;  
Rejoice, when threatening storms are near,  
And comfort languisheth :

When should not they rejoice

Whom Christ His brethren calls —  
Who hear and know His guiding voice,  
When on their hearts it falls?

**O** THOU who makest the sun to go forth in glory out of his chamber, rejoicing as a giant to run his course, we bless Thee for the light of this world, for the joy of beholding the day and especially all the days of the Son of Man. Leave us not in the shadow of spiritual death, or under the cloud of mortal fear or despair, but may the bright Sun of Righteousness, even the Lord Jesus Christ, never cease to shine within us. And so may the desert of our nature rejoice and blossom as the rose, and the earthly within us be changed into the heavenly, to Thy praise and glory, world without end. *Amen.*

## Fifth Monday.

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Wherefore doth a living man complain? Let us search and try our ways and turn again to the Lord.

Do all things without murmurings.

A SINGULAR subtilty attaches to the sin of excessive fault-finding, which makes it remarkably difficult of correction. Self-knowledge is rare enough, in respect to nearly all habitual transgressions. Almost every kind of science is mastered with less painstaking. But this knowledge comes with peculiar slowness to complainers. It is doubtful whether one person in a hundred of those who are conspicuously given to looking on the bad side of their lot, pointing out real or imaginary foibles in their neighbors, and speaking censoriously to their house-mates, would be found to be conscious in the least degree of having any other than a charitable judgment, a sweet tongue, and a reasonably contented disposition. In fact it would not be a thing totally unknown if the eye, so keen in seeing defects, should be considered by its possessor as a rather superior

organ of discernment, the censoriousness a righteous resentment at other people's offenses, and the bitter speech, the frank vivacity of a clever critic.

But God searches us within, and searches us out. These perpetual murmurings make no acceptable music in His ear, and He has condemned them. They find no pattern or sanction in the gentleness of the conversation of Christ. They are at deadly war with the charity which thinketh no evil, but suffereth long and is kind. They disturb the air, ruffle the temper, provoke angry rejoinders, make virtue difficult, discourage penitents, exasperate children, disorder society, and degrade the honor of the Church. They are a gross form of ingratitude to God; for if we were really mindful of the countless mercies we are receiving, how could we find time or heart to speak only of the blemishes or short-comings of those around us?

Many a man who is honestly and energetically doing a man's work in the world, and doing it on Christian principles, and who really means to be neither a bad neighbor nor an unkind father, mars all his labor and intercourse by a ceaseless dribble of ill-natured accusations or querulous comments. Many a school-girl makes herself gradually hateful by simply overlooking the good traits and exaggerating the weaknesses of her companions. Many a

housekeeper moves about her domestic domain, not a tyrant or a slattern, but more mischievous than either, fretting at the perversity of every article of furniture, the imperfections of every servant, the happening of every mischance. Nay, in a more solemn and awful wronging of the Spirit, many a mother, blessed with ten thousand daily benefits from Heaven, gives her children only a daily example of wretched dissatisfaction. She may even aggravate and fix in the character of her child habits of disobedience or negligence by simply *expecting* them, watching for them, satirizing them, with never a healing whisper of approval or a gracious accent of hearty encouragement. Not so does the Father in heaven bring His "wandering and distempered child" homeward, and give His sons and daughters their cheerful places in His House.

Whoever is in bondage to an error so unsightly and so disastrous may find help in these four brief counsels : —

One day in every week keep a rigid account with yourself of all you say ; every few minutes ask yourself how many times you have spoken complainingly ; and present the score to yourself and God for reckoning at night.

Dare to ask some trusted person to give you a sign whenever you fall into the bad practice.

Be in the habit of counting up your blessings, especially those that pertain to your person and your home.

Ask God to send you special strength to conquer this easily besetting sin.

Light human nature is too lightly tost  
And ruffled without cause; complaining on —  
Restless with rest — until, being overthrown,  
It learneth to lie quiet. Let a frost  
Or a small wasp have crept to the innermost  
Of our ripe peach; or let the wilful sun  
Shine westward of our window, — straight we run  
A furlong's sigh, as if the world were lost.  
But what time through the heart and through the brain  
God hath transfixed us — we, so moved before,  
Attain to a calm; aye, shouldering weights of pain,  
We anchor in deep waters, safe from shore;  
And hear, submissive, o'er the stormy main,  
God's chartered judgments walk for evermore.

**O** GOD of infinite patience and long suffering unspeakable, who hearest all our miserable complainings, and seest all our disregard of Thine unnumbered mercies, let not our sins of word and temper be written against us. Grant us repentance and better minds, that we may forgive as we hope to be forgiven, and that we forfeit not Thy continued forbearance and loving kindness towards us and those we love, for Thy great goodness' sake in Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord.  
*Amen.*

## Fifth Tuesday.

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Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord.

Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor.

FALSEHOOD, in other words, has its deepest guilt and its certainty of punishment in this, — that it crosses God's will, contradicts His character, and is hateful to His feeling. The subject is lifted at once out of the region of mere expediency, and set purely on the grounds of religion. We are put in mind not of the human consequences of lying, not of its social mischiefs, nor of its moral meanness; its one great effect is that it offends the Almighty; its comprehensive mischief, under all its varieties and disguises, is its sacrilege; its worst meanness is its ingratitude to the Heavenly Father. We must remember all along, therefore, that it is not merely an immorality that we are contemplating, but an impiety. The wise man does not charge it upon lying lips, as he might, that they are an injury to men: he strikes deeper and tells us the more alarming



secret that they are abomination to the Lord. By the Gospel every moral obligation is traced up to its source in the mind of God ; there is no ethics but Christian ethics ; the duties of society are all duties first to the Creator ; and the highest motive for the simplest act of justice is to honor God, or conformity to His will.

And as this is the loftiest view of the subject, so we shall find it is the most practical. The mind is so constituted in itself, that it is impressed with a fresh and fearful sense of what a falsehood is, the moment it realizes that the falsehood is a contradiction of God. No matter how trivial the occasion, or how remote the matter of the lie may be from all the high concerns of Heaven, it is told in the full presence and plain hearing of our Judge. Let it pertain to so insignificant an interest as a piece of merchandise in the market, or a school-boy's whisper, or a demagogue's declamation, or a woman's jealousy, instantly the roof is uncovered, the walls retreat, earthly scenery sweeps away,—all is open up to the Great White Throne, and the false tongue is speaking to its Maker. He hears it, and it is an abomination to Him. The lie may prosper for its purpose. The multitudinous waves of traffic roll on with their noise, and the good bargain, closed by the deceit, thrives without rebuke ; the child escapes the

punishment he deserved and forgets the sin ; the slanderous speaker's point tells, and his candidate goes in ; the swift stream of social gossip and mirth makes no pause when the flippant or envious tongue insults the unseen Auditor who is listening ; but *He is listening*, and after the lights are all out, the school-room locked, the election over, and the market still,—the falsehood remains stamped in letters which some time or other will look intensely bright, as if they were written with fire because it was an abomination to the Lord.

It will help us, too, to appreciate the surprising facility that is shown in learning to tolerate the abomination, and the energy of the temptation, to notice the prolific variety of shapes into which a spirit that is willing to be false throws itself out. It would seem, in fact, that there is scarcely an assailable point or quality in us, which is not capable of being suborned into this depraved service of deceit. There is the lie of sheer cowardice, told to evade some threatened personal danger, or the formidable lion of public opinion, or the ridicule of unprincipled associates, which was Peter's lie at the High Priest's court. There is the lie of cupidity and money-making, — direct and indirect, — one of the sordid sins of commercial populations, and sometimes, as in Ananias and Sapphira, making its sacrilegious compromise

with the profession of Christian liberality. There is the lie of convenience, as when children, and beggars, and tedious visitors are put off with a deception, to get a riddance of their annoyance and importunity. There is the lie of shame, like Gehazi's, when, after craftily wounding his hospitable master's honor by accepting Naaman's gifts, he said to Elisha, "Thy servant went no whither." There is the lie of flattery, with its double wrong, — Satan coming by it in the angelic garment of amiability, or the wish to please. There is the lie of ambition, the guile that spoils the eloquence of orators and authors who have popularity for their god and office for their heaven, — the crooked path through which thousands all round us creep through corruption to the disappointments of what looked once to them like leading positions. There is the conventional lie, as in the false labels of business, or the false excuse at the door, for which it is pleaded that custom has made it harmless, but of which it is enough to observe in reply that if *nobody* were deceived by it it would not be kept up, and that God has nowhere told us that a custom in sin makes the sin sinless. There is the lie of indolence, feigning sickness, or inability, to escape work for Christ or trouble for the needy. There is the lie of revenge, with the gall and wormwood of slander dripping from its tongue. There is the lie

of vanity, with what the Apostle calls its "great swelling words" of boasting, or else making the abused body the burden-bearer of a whole theatre of illusions. There is the lie of reckless ingenuity, the love of the marvelous, inventing wonders or adding to them, as if truth itself were but a plaything, and imagination the godless conjurer to sport with it. Then there are all the *degrees* of falsehood, — exaggerations, or adding to the truth, extenuations, or taking from it, — of which it is enough to say that when once a living conscience takes knowledge how easily their falsifying processes go on, it must watch their beginnings as we watch the first symptoms of pestilence. There are equivocations, deceptions in which people allow themselves by first practicing the self-deception that a falsehood half-hidden from men is wholly hidden from God, or that it is safe to go half-way in that which is an abomination to Him. You need not be reminded that there are acted falsehoods, of manner and gesture, of signs and ornaments, of pretended friendship and assumed cordiality and hypocritical devotion; nor need it be repeated to you that speech is no more an expression of the mind than action is, and that by lying lips Scripture means all the lies that the whole body can tell, and that one of them is just as hateful to the God of truth, and just as sure of judgment, as another.

Be God's prophet to yourself, and let this Lenten solemnity give you a brave and honest will to set your standard of truthfulness, in speech and in conduct, at a higher mark ; to change, as you are perfectly able to do, by a little Christian courage and spirit, ambiguous customs ; to cover up with refinements and elegancies no hollow or deceptive hearts ; to require of your clerks, your servants, your children, no complicity in words or acts that will not bear the full light of the Bible-inspiration and of the judgment day, — to put away lying and speak every man truth with his neighbor. Nor will there ever be a better time to begin to come back to religious reality than now.

All the grandeurs of righteousness grow out of truth in the inner parts. All the glories of heaven are but the triumph of the Truth, — say the blossoming of it, rather, into those immortal gardens with no serpent in them. And so in all the blackness of darkness there is no depth of misery which does not open down from that beginning of falsehood, when the sinning heart says to itself, after the great lie that blighted Eden and ruined man, "Thou shalt not surely die."

One can imagine that under these awful sentences, — "Without the gates of the City of God is whosoever loveth and maketh a lie," — "The lying

tongue is but for a moment," — "Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord," — and "He that saith I know Him and keepeth not His commandments is a liar and the truth is not in him," — the best soldier of the Cross and the purest saint at the Saviour's feet might be dismayed. And we can only reassure ourselves, when we recall those wonderful words of St. John which change the face of the world from terror to thanksgiving: "If we say that we have no sin we make Him a liar and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. For we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous, and He is the propitiation for our sins; and the anointing which ye have received of Him is truth and is no lie, and, even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in Him."

O man of Calvary and Bethlehem,  
Thou who didst suffer rather than condemn,  
Grant us to touch Thy garment's healing hem.

Thou trailest Thy fair robes of seamless light  
Through this dark world of falsehood, death, and night;  
Its blackness cannot mar Thy spotless white.

Thou dost not, Master, as we pass Thee by,  
Draw in Thy robes lest we should come too nigh.  
Our lying lives are open to Thine eye.

There is no shrinking from our untrue touch,  
Thy tenderness to us is ever such.  
Change, and forgive ! and we will love Thee much.

**J**UST and true are all Thy ways, Thou King of Saints!  
Pardon, we entreat Thee, the insincerity of our lips, the deceitfulness of our minds, and the untruthfulness of our lives. Thou, who camest into the world to bear witness to the truth, uphold us in the paths of integrity and honor. Make us both ashamed and afraid to offend Thee by breaking Thy righteous commandment. And suffer us at the last, through Thy propitiation, to enter in where entereth nothing that defileth ~~or~~ that maketh a lie. We ask it for Thy mercy's sake. *Amen.*

## Sixth Wednesday.

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The righteous Lord loveth righteousness.

Just balances, just weights, a just ephah, and a just hin shall ye love.

A false balance is abomination to the Lord, but a just weight is His delight.

SWINGING in the air before our eyes this tangible type represents the law and duty of justice with singular accuracy and beauty. A pair of scales is the symbol of mutuality, or reciprocity, between man and man. Each side or cup of the scales with its contents owes its position not to any natural value or independent force it has in itself, but to what there is on the opposite side of the support. The true position, when both rest after their vibration, is that when the opposite weights are equal. These are the mutual rights of men. The standard, supporting the whole, firm and fixed, represents the upholding Hand of God, keeping just men and unjust men, for the time, alike, while it tries and proves them, what manner of men they are, and how they



turn. The two arms, parts of one whole, resting on this upright prop, are the great regular operations, the customs and laws, of traffic, social communication and influence. Suspended from them, by that chain which ties us all to the social and commercial system, are individuals, with their freewill, conscience, and temptations. Will you, the individual, be just?—is the question. Will you be content with the fair, right balance, between all your interests, pleasures, claims, rights, and other men's? Will selfishness surrender that to which self has no fair title? Will you be uneasy, as the balances are, till you honorably and righteously adjust yourself to every fellow being's rightful demand? Will you empty your hands of everything in them, no matter how much what you hold there may gratify sense, or ambition, or pride, no matter how necessary it may be to keep up the apparatus and style which seem to you now like a part of your life,—will you give it all up, and so be clean-handed even though you shall be empty-handed, *just* with God? Will you? Dare you? Then you know where you are, and Who is with you, and how it will all go and be with you: for it is written down in almost every form of benediction: "The just shall come out of trouble." "A just man falleth seven times and riseth again." "The oppressor may heap up silver

as the dust, and prepare raiment as the clay, he may prepare it, but the just shall put it on and the innocent shall divide the silver." "The Lord blesseth the habitation of the just." Nay, he has the springs of a jubilant satisfaction in himself. "It is a joy to the just to do judgment." His course is no flat, tame, or dusky road of drudgery and commonplace; it mounts up into the splendors where the spiritual noontide fulfills the hope of the morning: "The path of the just is as the shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." Beyond that, "the *memory* of the just is blessed." It is written in the first book of the Bible, — the prophecy of all time: "I know him that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord to do justice and judgment, that the Lord may bring upon him that which He hath spoken." It is written in the last book, where time is ended, and the resurrection of the just has come, and the assembly of the just, now made perfect, is gathered, and the everlasting anthem is begun, "Just and true are Thy ways, Thou King of Saints." And when these Scriptures eulogize the heroes preëminent in justice, observe what lofty and elect spirits they mention, Noah and Abraham, Lot and Job, Simeon and John and Joseph; nay, they are not afraid to find in that plain virtue a title of

dignity for Jesus Himself, calling Him "the Holy One and the Just."

Come back now to our earthly societies, and the daily trying of this virtue here. Almost all our life is implicated in some social relation : and in all the enlarging series of circles, — the family, the school, the neighborhood, the sphere of public business, the nation, — that balancing of mutual rights, with all its delicate exposures and dangers, its sources of sin, and pain, and meanness, and moral victory and glory, is going on. Hence is the solemn necessity and the religious sanctity of justice, — such justice as only Christ teaches and the Christian learns. And because of all these various kinds of commerce, the commerce of material things, in property and merchandise, stands as a kind of representative and illustration, so the scales have become the recognized symbol of commercial honesty. The "false balance" is the special falsehood of commerce : but it is the emblem of all injustice. On the one side something is given or taken for which there is no offset on the other. And yet, observe there *seems* to be an offset. The scales hang even to the eye. But something which is not the just weight is put in to look as if it were, to satisfy appearances by a deception. The buyer gets something for which he paid nothing ; or the seller is paid something for

which he delivers nothing. And this is done, not by the frank and open injustice which lets the uneven scales hang out in sight, so that the victim may know that he is wronged: that is the old and bold injustice of semi-barbarous days, when feudal robbers built their castles on rocks overhanging the fords and entrapped the merchant caravans as they crossed the streams between the markets; that was the less cunning and less cowardly robbery of the outlaw and freebooter, whose only law was in his sword, and his only conscience in his glove, and his only right was might; it is done now rather by some deception that slips the falsehood into the balance itself, leaving the transaction unchallenged, the fraud safe, and the villain to go unarmed and unquestioned through the streets every day, into good society every evening, and on Sunday to church. The way these more open and disgraceful kinds of dishonesty creep in is through the undermining of sound principle first, the clouding of the clear conscience first, the toleration of both the idea and the fact of fraudulent connivance first, in trivial and unnoticed affairs. "We are not worst at first." The birth-place of those vast and awful wrongs, which occasionally startle the community into horror, lies back in the petty injustices where children are allowed to take unfair advantage of those weaker or

younger or poorer than themselves, in the selfish exactions of the nursery, the over-reaching and deception of the play-ground, the careless accounts with ignorant and dependent people which a loose moral sense dismisses as insignificant. No, they are fearfully significant.

Gradually the mind that is familiarized with the notion of injustice grows unscrupulous and faithless. That is the history of all the gigantic public oppressions that have sent up their cry till the cry has entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. You will find that the warnings of the Old Testament prophets, through the periods of national decline, are almost constantly directed to uneven balances, — to oppression and exaction, to legalized wrong, to the making of the poor poorer, and the burdens of the weak harder to be borne: “Are not my ways equal? Are not your ways unequal? Cease to do evil. Relieve the oppressed. Right the fatherless. Plead for the widow.” “Shall I count them pure with the deceitful balances?” saith the Lord. It could not have been by accident, that the Apostle took pains to write to the Church, “Give unto your servants that which is just and equal.” The poor, who have few friends to confide their sorrows to, often tell them to their ministers; and many a minister could uncover if he chose amazing and humiliating wrongs

borne by needy work-women and artisans in the humblest condition, from the simple withholding, from day to day, or week to week, of their little dues in wages by opulent employers, who would resent the faintest suggestion of dishonesty, — their very habit of dealing only with large amounts making it impossible for them to realize that a day's delay of a dollar sometimes leaves the family board absolutely bare of bread. It is the injustice of their thoughtlessness. But it is injustice. The balance is not even. The just weight is wanting. There are hungry children crying in the night; there is a sad household somewhere; there is no food for the mouth, but there is fearful food for skepticism and despair, — doubts of men and doubts of God, and all that perilous preparation of dumb discontent, out of which the whirlwinds of revolution are finally let loose.

What we all most need in this great and holy doctrine of justice is not so much a repetition of the ordinary remonstrances against it, as that deeper insight into its springs and secret workings, which, in some sense, spiritualizes the morality of it, smiting the soul with a reverent perception and adoration of the immaculate justice in Christ our Lord. And it is on that line of thought that you will all see how far we come short of what He demands, if we stop

and content ourselves with the mere external rules of integrity. Think rather,—if you would begin with the roots of the truth, and let it grow up strong and living within you,—of the injustices of our more retired and inward commerce with each other, where no bargains are struck, and no visible value changes hands. Think of the injustice of our social judgments,—of our rash and envious suspicions, not concealed either but spoken out,—of the unjust imputation of motives, of prejudice, of unworthy and unwarranted construction where a fairer theory would suit the facts just as well. Consider the injustice done to children, in prejudging their little issues, in shutting off their defenses and explanations, in taking their silence, shyness, and unskillfulness and alarm for tokens of conscious guilt; in refusing the patient sympathy that enters into the pathos and misery of those hours of strange sorrow they have, which are only the painful throes of high and nobler aspiration beating against the bars of natural reserve and fighting their way out to manly or womanly power. Think of the injustice of anger and impatience that is often intermixed in even their deserved reproofs and punishments, and compare it with that gracious judgment of the Rod of Jesus of which it is so tenderly written that “He shall reprove with equity for the meek of the earth.” Think of the

injustice to sensitive natures in reckoning with them all as if they were moulded in one pattern, with uniform temperaments or the same discipline, or as if all who undertake the Christian calling undertook it with the same strength, or at the same point of advance. Probably there are very few hearts but feel that at times the balances are hung unevenly and cruelly against them. Nor should we ever find the reconciling of this wrong, if we did not betake ourselves to Him who carried our griefs, who died, the just for the unjust, and whose sacrifice of Himself righted the wrongs and redeemed the bondage of our Race.

In fact, all these exercises of ours in what is just and equitable between man and man are only a kind of school to educate us the better into a completer knowledge of the justice of God. Confess, as we ought, praise and bless, as we must, the mercy and the truth that go before His face, we can yet never forget that it is justice and judgment that are the habitation of His throne. Reverence would fail, awe would sink, worship would degenerate into a weak, fond familiarity, were the balance between His equity and His compassion unsettled. So you find that it is the men of the most scrupulous sense of human right that appreciate this attribute in the Almighty, while sentimentalists and visionaries, not



trusting it in God, are the less trusty with men. So you find, too, that that earlier economy of Divine Law, given by Moses, which had it for its special object to train and discipline God's People in the one great reality of His Personal Government over the world, practically worked this necessity of justice, by repeated statutes and sanctions, into the national mind. "Just balances, just weights, a just ephah and a just hin shall ye have." "Thou shalt not have in thine house divers measures, a great and a small (lest possibly they might be mixed together) but thou shalt have a perfect and just weight, a perfect and just measure, that thy days may be lengthened which the Lord thy God giveth thee. For all that do unrighteously are an abomination unto the Lord thy God." And when this schooling of the just law is filled out, opening into the richer ministry of Grace in the Cross, under whose shadow we and the whole Church are now drawing day by day, still Justice is never forgotten or discredited or veiled; the atonement loves justice while it loves the unjust soul; and so it is written of the Divine and matchless mystery of reconciliation: "That He might *be just*, and yet the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." In St. Peter's burning sermon, after the Resurrection, at Jerusalem, in St. Stephen's dying defense, in St. Paul's divine commission

at Damascus, the Saviour is called the "Just One," and we are told that none living are His, in the regeneration here or the resurrection hereafter, but the just by faith.

Business men and devout women may be Christians, and devising liberal things for their Master, whose hands have never learned to wipe out the small dust of deceit which usage and precedent have left in the balance. But the sooner they make away with it, the better honor for the Head, and the better progress and power for the Church. Remember, nothing stays her wheels like the frauds of her defenders. Nothing under the Holy Spirit speeds them like saints whose ways, patterned after their Eternal King's, are true and just.

Once, as at this sorrowful season, it was Hebrew hypocrisy and Roman contempt that denied that Holy and Just Jesus. But our injustices, shielded under His name, may deny Him still. May He put his balance and weight not only into our hands, but into our hearts, lead us in the straight way, and make His House of praise a habitation of the just!

"My God, be merciful to me!" I cried.

He raised me up,

With wine revived me from His blessed cup,

And when I lifted up my drooping head,

He gently said,

“ He who would bear my light and easy yoke  
Must wear love’s bridle also in his lips.  
Love is a spring  
Which in the dark depths of the heart must rise,  
Fed from the skies,  
Extend its influence to everything,  
To just deeds, truthful lips, and gentle eyes.  
This is the charity alone I prize,  
Not that which, while it clothes one brother,  
Doth pierce with wrong the spirit of another.  
Go forth, my daughter, to thy work once more,  
I for that garment wait without thy door;  
But while their blessed work thy hands pursue,  
Be thy thoughts also to their Master true.”  
He left me; and with spirit chastened,  
Back to my work I hastened.  
I sat and busily my fingers plied  
In working for the poor and destitute.  
My work within me did sweet thoughts create  
Of Him who died,  
And who would say of deeds of sympathy,  
“ Ye did them unto Me.”  
But with these thoughts of grace  
My lips, alas! refused to keep pace;  
And harsh and unjust words I idly spoke;  
When suddenly a light around me broke,  
And I was in the presence of the King.  
I sought the fond approval of His eye  
By lifting up my work of charity,  
And marveled that it did not win His smile;

When lo! I thought upon my words of guile,  
And fell before Him sadly on my face,  
For now I knew what brought the dark eclipse  
Betwixt the brightness of His face and me.

**T**HOU God of righteousness and truth, whose blessing resteth only on those who being justified by faith strive to obey Thy just and holy law, blot out our transgressions, committed either through unbelief toward Thee or injustice towards our neighbors. Bless all those that we have wronged, or defrauded, or scorned, or slighted. Help us to restore to them fourfold for every injury, and henceforth to walk with them in uprightness and true charity. And so may Thy benediction rest on our souls, our substance, our dwellings, and on Thy Church in which we are members, through Christ Thy Son, our Lord. *Amen.*

## Sirth Chursday.

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Jesus saith unto them, Follow Me.

He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without Me ye can do nothing.

I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

BELIEVERS are in Christ, so as to be partakers in all that He does, and has, and is. They died with Him, and rose with Him, and live with Him, and in Him are seated in heavenly places. When the eye of God looks on them they are found in Christ, and there is no condemnation to those that are in Him, and they are righteous in His righteousness, and loved with the love which rests on Him, and are sons of God in His Sonship, and heirs with Him of His inheritance, and are soon to be glorified with Him in His glory.

So also Christ is in those who believe; associating His own presence with their whole inward and outward life. They know that Jesus Christ is in them,

except they be reprobates. They live, yet not they, but Christ liveth in them, and He is their strength and their song. This idea underlies all that is said, gives the point of view from which every subject is regarded, and supplies the standard of character and the rules of conduct. We move in a new world of thought, and are raised to a level of doctrine which we had not reached before, though the Gospels had prepared us for it, and the Acts had led us towards it. In the Gospels we have stood like men who watch the rising of some great edifice, and who grow familiar with the outlines and the details of its exterior aspect. In the preaching of the Acts we have seen the doors thrown open, and joined the men who flock into it as their refuge and their home. In the Epistles we are actually within it, sheltered by its roof, encompassed by its walls; we pass, as it were, from chamber to chamber, beholding the extent of its internal arrangements and the abundance of all things provided for our use. We are here "*in Christ Jesus.*" The presence which was lately before our eyes, and drew us towards itself, now absorbs and wraps us round, and has become the ground on which we stand, the air which we breathe, the element in which we live and move and have our being. The Churches are "*in Christ;*" the persons are "*in Christ.*" They are "*found in Christ*" and "*pre-*

served in Christ," are "rooted, built up," and "made perfect in Christ." Their ways are ways that be in Christ; their conversation is "a good conversation" in Christ; their faith, hope, love, joy, their whole life is "in Christ." They think, they speak, they walk "in Christ." They labor and suffer, they sorrow and rejoice, they conquer and triumph "in the Lord." They receive each other and love each other "in the Lord." The fundamental relations, the primal duties of life, have been drawn within the same circle. "The man is not without the woman, nor the woman without the man, in the Lord." Wives submit themselves to their husbands "in the Lord;" children obey their parents "in the Lord." The broadest distinctions vanish in the common bond of this all-embracing relation. "As many as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ; there is neither Greek nor Jew; there is neither bond nor free; there is neither male nor female; they are all one in Christ Jesus." The influence of it extends over the whole field of action, and men "do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him." The truth which they hold is "the truth as it is in Jesus;" the will by which they guide themselves is "the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning them." Finally, this character of existence is not changed by that which changes all be-

sides. Those who have entered on it depart, but they "die in the Lord," they "sleep in Jesus," they are "the dead in Christ;" and "when He shall appear," they will appear; and when He comes, "God shall bring them with Him," and they shall "reign in life by one — Jesus Christ."

"Of Him are ye in Christ Jesus." That is not the statement of a doctrine, but the summary of a life. Surely I must ask, — Is it a life which I am living now? I glance over the writings of the Apostles, and see the holy and beloved name shining in every part of them, and mingling its presence with every thought and feeling, every purpose and hope. I see an ever present consciousness of being in Christ, and a habit of viewing all things in Him. Must I not look down into my heart, and ask whether my own inward life bears this character? Let me accept nothing in exchange for this. Men bid me live in duty and truth, in purity and love. They do well. But the Gospel does better; calling me to live in Christ, and to find in Him the enjoyment of all that I would possess and the realization of all that I would become.

Rest of the weary,  
Joy of the sad,  
Hope of the dreary,  
Light of the glad.



Home of the stranger,  
Strength to the end,  
Refuge from danger,  
Saviour and Friend!

Pillow, where lying  
Love rests its head,  
Peace of the dying,  
Life of the dead:  
Path of the lowly,  
Prize at the end,  
Breath of the holy,  
Saviour and Friend.

When my feet stumble  
I'll to Thee cry,  
Crown of the humble,  
Cross of the high:  
When my steps wander,  
Over me bend,  
Truer and fonder,  
Saviour and Friend.

Ever confessing  
Thee, I will raise  
Unto Thee blessing,  
Glory and praise:  
All my endeavor,  
World without end,  
Thine to be ever,  
Saviour and Friend.

**O** GOD who hast new begotten us from the dead by the Life and Resurrection of Thy Son, grant unto us that we may reckon ourselves dead unto sin but alive unto Thee through Jesus Christ our Lord, who hath quickened us when we were dead in trespasses and sins, and brought our immortality to light. Mortify and kill all vices in us, and make us new in the new creation of purity and holiness and love. Take from us that fleshly mind which is death, and increase in us ever more and more that spiritual life which is light and peace. May we live in this world as if we were dead to it, it being no more we that live, but Christ that liveth in us. And as years pass on and natural death comes nearer to us, may we have a continually surer hope in Him who hath abolished death and taken the victory from the grave — even the same Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

## Sixth Friday.

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To do good and to distribute forget not, for with *such sacrifices* God is well pleased.

The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts.

Ye have robbed me. But ye say wherein have we robbed Thee? In tithes and offerings.

A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples.

UTTERLY in vain is it that we keep with sober manners and outward veneration the blessed Time which is now bearing us on so near the Cross, if the spirit of sacrifice is not in us. And what is sacrifice?

While every interest of human life, every faculty of mind and body, and every sphere of action, gives some opportunity for the spirit of sacrifice, its most obvious form is in gifts of money, the current representative of material value. Perhaps this is especially true of a community like ours, commercial in

its pursuits, apt to turn almost everything into money, or to reckon it by that standard, exhibiting the contrasts of fortune by sharp lines, and in a thousand ways drawing back the minds of men to this kind of calculation. No doubt some persons are so constituted, or so situated, that it would be a harder cross for them to give other things, as time, or attention, or sympathy, or house-room, to Christ's missions, or to God's poor, than a modicum of their property. But of the great majority in these days, and hereabouts, it may be safely said, as of the young man in the New Testament, that if they can resist the common passion for gain, and cheerfully do their whole duty in giving up their money for the Gospel's sake, they have gone a great way towards the grand Christian attainment of overcoming the world, and are not far from the Kingdom of Heaven and of Christ.

If we would be as He is in this world, if we would follow His steps as our loving Master, if we would, not among men only but before His Father and the Holy Angels, be acknowledged as His disciples, if we would receive a disciple's reward, if we would hear the gracious words, "For as much as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me," there is but one way, one straight narrow way; the way

of self-denying charity. Gifts, which are given out of our abundance, may gain us credit among men, they may show a kindly spirit, such as the Jews were bid to cherish, but they are not tokens of Christian love. Alas, would that we were not put to shame by the very Jews, would that our righteousness came up even to theirs, and that we provided for our poor as they even now do for theirs! would that we, who are God's people, came up to them, who for the time are "not His people!" Of old they bestowed year by year one tenth of their substance on the poor, beyond the one tenth which they gave to God's Priests; yearly they retained but four fifths for themselves; one fifth of the increase wherewith God had blessed them, they gave to Him in His ministers and His poor; and each third year, they gave a third tenth to God.

And shall we then, on whom the very name of the Son of God has been called, be content with a Jewish charity? shall we, on whom the light and love of the Gospel have been poured, fall short of the measures of the Law? have we no faith, no eyes to see, no hearts to look for, heavenly treasures? shall we always be so fixed on the things of this passing world, as to have no sense left for the things of eternity? shall we, year by year, celebrate the fasts and festivals of the self-denying love of our

Master and only Saviour ; year by year, accompany Him in outward gesture from the manger whither He descended from the highest Heavens to the Cross whence He ascended thither again, and year by year hear Him in word and deed bid us love these our and His brethren *as* He has loved us and yet go on, year by year, loving — not ourselves, but — the perishable comforts, luxuries, ease, of our perishing frames, and neglecting those whom He has committed to our love, until He come again and require of us an account of our stewardship, and of our deeds of love to those, in whom He bids us show our love to Him? Shall we go on speaking of His Atoning Sacrifice, but ourselves sacrifice nothing ; of His poverty for us, but have ourselves no thought except for this world's riches ; of His humiliation for us, but ourselves seek only how to exalt ourselves and our families in this world ; of His abandoning all His unspeakable glory, and ourselves seek our glory and credit in this passing scene ; of His having “emptied Himself” of His inherent Majesty, and ourselves remain “full” ? Not in words but in deeds did He love us, when He came down amid our sin and shame and sufferings, to be hated, scorned, crucified, to bear our sins ; not in words but in deed do we hope that He will show His love, in that way in which if He compassioneth us not with

His exceeding love, we are undone forever ; not in words then, but in deeds must be the love which we meanwhile show to Him in His poor ; learning, slowly it may be, but day by day, to deny ourselves our own desires, to forego things in which we should have pleasure, and what tempts the eyes, the taste, the senses ; looking not at what we can afford to spend upon self, but what we may lawfully deny self ; not what additional comforts we may keep around us, but what indulgences which we have we may part with, that we may give the more unto Him ; looking in detail into our expenses, in order warily to cut off superfluities ; seeking how our habits may become more simple ; parting with luxuries which perish in the using, and which soon must part with us, in order to win the love of God ; parting with what we now call comforts, to win the only assured comfort, peace with God and joy in the Holy Ghost, the earnest of acceptance and of everlasting rewards, — parting with earth to win heaven ; with things temporal for things eternal, with fading enjoyments for everlasting glory ; with things without us, that Christ (as He has promised to those who love) may make His abode *in* us.

#### Heaven's King

Doth bid thee to a marriage feast each day.

His banquet is full dressed.  
He asks thee for His guest.  
Nor count it a light thing  
If thou refuse or if thou dost obey.  
If thou shouldst go thy way,  
And for earth's farm and merchandise  
His great command despise,  
Beware lest in His royal wrath He swear  
That thou shalt ne'er partake its sacred fare  
And that He seek for guests who will not say  
Him "Nay."  
The spirit of self-sacrifice  
Stays not to count its price.  
Christ did not of His mere abundance cast  
Into the empty treasury of man's store.  
The First and Last  
Gave until even He could give no more, —  
His very living  
Such was Christ's Giving.

**O** THOU who didst stretch out Thine hands on the Cross in sacrifice for us, all unworthy, greater love can none show than Thou hast shown. Thou didst lay aside the glory of Heaven for the glory of Calvary. Thou who wert rich with infinite treasures didst become poor, with no place to lay Thine Head. Thou didst bear weariness and pain and hunger, and gavest Thy sacred body to the smiters for our sake. Oh forgive us, that, knowing this Thy love, we seek every one his own, and keep back from Thee what is Thine, and give only a little out of our comfort for Thy poor and Thy Church, and bestow that which we shall not miss. Blessed Jesus, grant us more



likeness to Thee, more love such as Thine, that we may sacrifice our possessions and comforts to others for Thy sake, and count it better to give than to receive. O Thou loving High Priest, who hast passed into the heavens within the veil, keep us with Thy mighty intercessions, that we may stand accepted in the Day of Thy coming again, who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Ghost, world without end. *Amen.*

## Saturday before Palm-Sunday.

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If any man serve Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there shall also My servant be. If any man serve Me, him will My Father honor.

Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, Save me from this hour? But for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify Thy name.

Come unto Me all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.

Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same.

THE strength of all supporting bodies, or structures under strain, is proved at their weakest point. Failing there they are worthless. The power of the personal Life of Christ over man is proved by its making man strong at just the weakest points in his experience. They are such as discouragement, suffering, the sense of sin, and the prospect of the ends. Each has its resorts and resources, like diversions, anodynes, philosophy. When these have all done their best, the Son of Man, never resentful at past neglect or repelled by disgust at the foolish

experiments of unbelief, brings the singular forces of His own Mediatorship,—the condescension of His divinity and the glorious splendor and triumphs of His humanity,—to conquer where the world has failed.

The daily stress of care has tired you out. The slowness of those steps by which you are following after your blessed Master,—slow in spite of your best efforts,—has disheartened you. But think. You have not to overtake your Lord, in order to be sure of His comfort and His blessing. He is not hurrying away from you. He has *come to you*. All the way from heaven,—all the way down to our poor, miserable mortality He has come, that He might seek after us, and find us, and stand with us just where we are, and love us here,—if only our willing hearts will let Him. Think what He left behind. Think what He gave up. Would He have been likely to do and to give all that if He did not love you; if He did not *mean* to have you for His own? After doing and enduring so much, will He push any follower from Him impatiently? “For this cause came I unto this hour.”

Think again. It would be a great sacrifice for you to leave your home, your comforts, and your friends, and go down into some cabin of vile and filthy creatures, where every taste would be offended and every

sense would be disgusted, to stay there performing menial offices, the wretched and cruel inmates hating and reviling you while you did them. That was what Jesus did. The way from the glory, purity, blessedness, that He had with the Father, down to us and our selfish, sinful ways, was farther than from our doors to any hovel of uncleanness or haunt of heathenism in the world. We are all farther from His Spirit than any of these fellow-sinners from ours. The difference never can be so great between one degree of sin and another as it is between perfect, spotless sinlessness and lives like ours. But further than this! Christ not only did this once: He is doing it still. He is still dwelling with us; still forbearing, enduring, and patient with us. Oh the depth of the condescension, the riches of that goodness, the love that passeth knowledge!

As Christ the Saviour is really near at hand with us, so He is still sensitive to our treatment of Him, still suffers from our faithlessness, and still rejoices in our affection. Every new sin we commit adds to our Saviour's Cross some new sharpness and heaviness. We mistake if, according to the superficial fashion and feeble faith of our time, we imagine all the bad consequences of that sin are limited to ourselves, and inflict no hurt save on our own "consciousness" or "progress." It drives deeper the nails of the liv-

ing Redeemer's torture. It sets fresh thorns into the mock-crown that made His temples bleed. It puts strength to the spear that pierced His side. Because it was not the wood, of cross or thorn, it was not the iron, of nail or spear, that entered into His soul and made up the real agony of His crucifixion. These were only the material instruments that touched and tore the flesh. The flesh itself was only the visible vestiture and outer sign of the Man Christ Jesus, who was crucified for us.

Believe it, whoever hewed the cross, or drove the nails, or platted the thorns, or pierced the side, — it is indifference, it is ingratitude, it is unbelief, it is selfishness, it is hard, cold, narrow worldliness, everywhere, always, here, now, yours, which crucifies the Lord of Glory, and is the agency of His crucifixion. Were these confined, do you think, to a few wicked rulers, and a few reckless soldiers, and a few hating hypocrites, in a Roman province, in Cæsar's time? No more than those Galileans whose blood Pilate mingled with their sacrifices were sinners above all the Galileans.

Turn to the other and happier part of the same solemn intimacy between the suffering Redeemer and His disciple. Every struggle of self-sacrifice for His sake delights Him, and lightens the gloom that darkens about His Calvary. There is an old German

legend of the bird called "the cross-bill," that it flew to Christ's cross, at the hour of His crucifixion, and tried to *draw out* the nails that fastened Him to the tree :

" Stained with blood, and never tiring,  
With its beak it doth not cease:  
From the Cross 't would tear the Saviour,  
Its Creator's Son release:"

and the story runs that as a benediction for this sympathy, the Lord promised the earnest creature that the blood drops which then sprinkled its plumage should stay, and color all its kind with that holy sign, evermore. Like many other Christian imaginations, the fable has a practical and a scriptural meaning. The service and self-denial of His followers, rendered to the Saviour for His own sake, deepens in them the marks and the blessing of His sacrifice, and makes its benefit permanent. Whatever you do or suffer for His honor, whether you come by faith, humbly praying to see Jesus, and sit at His feet, or whether you take up the cross, and work and give and endure hardship as a good soldier in His cause, He sets a sign of living glory in your soul, better than any crown. "Him will my Father honor." You can afford to be weary many nights, and to labor at hard drudgeries many days, for night and day the Son of Man tells you by His own blessed

lips, of "the love which passeth knowledge," — and that, being "rooted and grounded" in it, you may "comprehend, with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height!"

Lord, who in pain and weariness  
Thy path of sorrow here didst tread;  
Who, scorned of man, and shelterless,  
Couldst find no place to lay Thy Head;  
Grant Thy shelter, Jesu meek,  
To Thy poor who refuge seek.

Lord, who through long and saddened years,  
Didst toil for suffering mankind;  
Didst bind their wounds, didst calm their fears,  
Didst cure the sick, the halt, the blind;  
Grant Thy healing, Jesu blest,  
To the faint, who long for rest.

Lord, who didst die upon the Rood,  
That we might ever die to sin,  
Who givest us Thyself as Food,  
To make us strong the goal to win;  
Grant Thy patience, Jesu dear,  
Unto all who suffer here.

Lord, who from burial didst arise,  
That we might rise to life in Thee,  
And hence ascended to the skies  
Dost rule all things in majesty;  
Grant Thy glory, Jesu pure,  
To the faithful who endure.

**O** MOST gracious Lord, our Saviour, who to do away our offenses didst not only bear cruel stripes and shameful insults and mockings, and a painful crown of thorns, but wast willing to be fastened with nails to the Cross like a thief, we entreat Thee by these Thy sufferings that Thou wouldst hear us, Thy weak and erring followers; spare us when we confess our sins; show us Thy hands and Thy feet when we are doubting; and make Thy wonderful condescension to our infirmities to be our lifting up into Thine eternal salvation and blessedness, that we may praise and glorify Thee with the Father and the Holy Ghost, world without end. *Amen.*



## Palm-Sunday.

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We see Jesus who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor; that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For both He that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, are all of one; for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, I will declare Thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the Church will I sing praise unto Thee. Wherefore in all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren; that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

On the next day much people that were come to the Feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, took branches of palm-trees and went forth to meet Him.

And many spread their garments in the way; and others cut down branches off the trees and strewed them in the way.

THE beginning of Holy Week finds the Saviour in the family of His friends, Mary and Martha and Lazarus. He is man, and human affection must both deepen and soften the pain of the coming separation. From this moment, by the guidance of the

Evangelists, we are able to follow the Great Sufferer on, day by day, and step by step, to the hour of His passion and of the world's redemption, when we hear Him cry, "It is finished," on the Cross. Having traveled southward towards the Holy City, from the retired spot on the borders of Samaria where He had spent several days in solitary preparation for the dreadful commotions and agonies of His public trial and crucifixion, — passing along the wild and dangerous road between the plains of Jericho and the uplands in the neighborhood of Jerusalem, — that road where the scene of the parable of the good Samaritan was laid, with its eternal lesson of Christian charity, — He seems to have come, late on Friday evening, to the village of Bethany, lying three or four miles east of the capital, — with the Mount of Olives between them, — and then to have entered that "highly-favored household," of which he had called back one member from death to life, only a few weeks before. There, in the evening, Simon makes a Feast for this Divine Guest, knowing the human but not the Divine Guest whom he entertains. There, Lazarus, a living witness of His resurrection power, sits with the company, his mysterious experience of the grave hidden in his heart. There Martha, with characteristic activity and anxiety, serves at the table. There one of the Marys, with lavish and

uncalculating devotion anoints her Lord's body for its burying, and gains her everlasting memorial "whosoever this Gospel shall be preached." It needs no very fertile imagination to fill out some solemn and touching picture of that supper, — the happy group, yet, with august apprehensions shadowing their festivity, the tender communion, the thankful remembrance of mercies and miracles past, the mutual pledges of eternal fidelity, and then the parting for the night's rest; He who sleeps there in mortal slumber the Living and Eternal Rest of the weary world! The next morning He took up His sorrowful journey again, and moved slowly towards the Temple. As the Passover, with its sacrifices, was just at hand, companies of pilgrims, driving sheep for the altar, would be seen in the highways, all gathering up from the four quarters, to the centre of the Nation's Faith. Among them goes the Lamb of God, — the one sacrifice, — final, perfect, and sufficient, whom these typical altars of thousands of years had heralded with their banners of smoke and flame. The day to see that marvelous fulfilled Scripture, that the *Lamb should be slain* in the fullness of ages and yet slain *from* the foundation of the world, is, at last, close by; "the hour" of which He so often spoke, as if all reckonings of days, in the knowledge of history, ran to and from that cen-

tral point of time. But then He is not only Sacrifice and Priest ; not only Prophet and Fulfillment ; but another of His comprehensive characters is Kingship. So, in token of that royal office whereby He is to reign forever, He must enter the city of His sacrifice with kingly honors, in meekness, to die, yet in majesty, to triumph. The beast to bear him is brought. The crowd is multiplied. Every hand snatches a green palm-branch from the trees by the wayside and waves it, or casts it at the conqueror's feet. Suddenly, as they rise to the hill-top where the city in its historic glory breaks on their sight, the familiar words of ancient prophecy come to pass: "Tell ye the daughter of Zion, Behold thy King cometh." At first a few tongues raise together a strain of triumphal welcome out of one of the Psalms, sung once in prediction of the Messiah to David's harp, and again by angels, over Bethlehem, David's City, at His birth. Immediately, "a thousand voices before and a thousand voices behind, rising up to Heaven with mingled harmonies of acclamation, cry together, saying, "Hosanna to the Son of David ; Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." Thus entering Jerusalem, and yet weeping human tears as he enters, at the thought of its impending overthrow, Christ goes directly to the Temple. "And when He had looked round

about upon all things," writes the second evangelist with impressive simplicity, "and now the eventide was come, He went out (again) unto Bethany, with the twelve." And so, in quiet contrast with the morning procession and pageant, the day closed. The living truth and consistency of all inspired Scripture have had another sublime illustration: and we are brought one day's journey nearer to Calvary.

The first great thought that now comes to fill our souls, and to shut out for the moment, — if not for all this Passion-week, — every thought besides, is this, that Christ is a Sufferer, — a Sufferer *before* us, a Sufferer *with* us, a Sufferer *for* us. At Bethany "Jesus wept." Four days hence He comes to Gethsemane, and the fifth to the Cross. He must gain the whole world's faith, to save it; He must lay hold of the widest possible range of human sympathies; and to that end He becomes a Sufferer. Not that He, or His religion, ministers to no states or seasons but those that are painful. *Something* in Him touches *everything* in us.

All our humanity, with all its possible moods and conditions is somehow included, and mastered, and interpreted, by Him. He goes with us in our recreation as well as in the funeral procession; He sits in the full circle of health at festivals, as well as with the mourner by the new made grave, or amidst

the fragments of ruined plans; He comes to Bethany when the three there are well, not only when Lazarus is dead. All the rooms of our houses are for Him, to come in and abide, as well as the chambers of sickness or of the laying out of the dead. This indeed is a characteristic trait that distinguishes the Christian Faith from every religious pretension that was ever set up. It is not one-sided, as being all for melancholy, or all for mirth, — not stoical or epicurean. It has as many sides as our life has, goes with us wherever we can go, and only asks that it may consecrate everything with its blessing. The Saviour sighs *for us*, that we may not sigh forever. He weeps with us, and bids us weep with each other, that even here we may be as though we wept not. He rejoices with us, so that, gaining our hearts, He may give them joys that are eternal.

But now, this comprehensive glory being claimed for our Gospel, we shall all agree that Jesus takes the ground of the largest and strongest influence for men, when He appears in sympathy with their troubles. Because our sharpest wants spring from some kind of trial, — in conscience, or heart, or body, — He meets us there with the *special* ministry of His mediation. It is when, looking up to heaven, with a miserable invalid before Him, He sighs; it is when, coming to the sepulchre of Lazarus with

His bereaved friends about Him, He weeps; it is when He cries out with His own anguish at Gethsemane and the Cross, that He draws nearest, *gives us most of Himself*, and makes us feel how really one with us, this Divine Redeemer is. Imagine for a moment a pretended Christ who demanded our faith chiefly on the score of His interest in our happier moments: how the burdened heart of the world, — and even of the happiest hearts in it, — would turn from Him, disappointed! If He did not sigh for us, we should still have to sigh for each other, and then to turn and sigh still for a Saviour that *would* sigh for us, — only in Him acknowledging the Master of our life and of our death.

In principle, this seems to be illustrated in the trust we put in any noble, masterly spirit. Take some personal grief; or take the grand peril and ordeal of a nation struggling for its liberties: the leader or the comforter who hopes there to centre in himself the complete confidence of his fellows must be seen to comprehend, and to feel, all the human agony, to the bottom of it. Without this deep yet simple secret, he can never command the souls of the people. So it is, precisely, with the spiritual Lordship of Christ. “For it became Him, for whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the *captain* of their salvation perfect

through sufferings." "*For*," in that way, through the common sympathy of suffering, "both he that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, are all of one."

Yes, "of one;" because men are really more at one in what they suffer than in what they enjoy: partly because they are more conscious of their mutual dependence then, and so are cast more vitally, and more openly, together; partly because pain is by its nature more intense, more thirsty, more exacting, than pleasure. It is not when some piece of fine fortune befalls a family in the neighborhood, but when death desolates their dwelling, or calamity darkens it, that they find out what generous treasures of good-will have been waiting for them in houses close by, and their neighbors draw near to them with reverential compassion. It is not a period of public prosperity that kindles the patriotism of a people, and binds them together in the unity of one common purpose: it is danger and war.

You scarcely see surprise in the gayest faces when you speak, if you speak simply and earnestly, of the sore struggle within, between the old man and the new, of tears or even of heart-breakings, — because, even in those bright lives, though the reality of affliction has not been felt, the shadow of it has



been seen across the broad field of sunshine. None would be quicker than they to confess the insufficiency of a Gospel which should provide only for hours of mirth or comfort. However fortunate your own lot at present, you would not trust yourself, for salvation, to any but a man of sorrows, acquainted with grief. When we imagine a world in which "pleasures banish pain," we are thinking of a world in which purity would banish sin. But this is not the real world which you and I are living in.

Accordingly, we find in the Son of Man signs of that intense sympathy with others' sorrow which is a kind of willing sorrow in itself. This fact lies close to the great central doctrine of our religion, in the incarnation, sacrifice, and atonement of our Lord, no matter how often a blind and stumbling theology has said otherwise: the redemption in Christ, though His death is an outward and historical fact, is not a cool transaction, wrought out at a distance from us, outside of us, and then mechanically brought over and paid down for us: oh, not this! Christ redeems us, by dying, and in that death entering, with all the powers of His sacrifice, and all the spirit of His mercy, and all the tenderness of His Cross, into the living seats of affection and trust within us. We know His crucifixion

only as we are crucified with Him. We are redeemed by Him, only as we are ever ready, in the spirit of self-denial, to make up, in personal sacrifice, that which is behind of His sufferings. We have to be bearing about, daily, the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be manifested in these mortal bodies.

I lifted up my harp, one day,  
And hasted forth to trace the great King's way,  
By palms of victory across it lying.  
I hurried on, regardless of a Child  
That passed me by,  
With wondrous eye.  
Long did I search, until at length  
I had exhausted all my feeble strength,  
Until one day I did espy  
Branches of palm, but withered all and dying.  
Feeling that He in triumph here had passed,  
I felt that I should find the King at last;  
When lo! an angel met me. "Wouldst thou see  
Thy King?" He led me out to Calvary,  
And there I found Him hanging on a tree;  
And in that Man of pain  
I knew the Child of heavenly look again.  
Trembling, I asked the sorrowing angel, "Why?"  
He told me that his Lord had come to die,  
And that His death would be  
Eternal life to me and such as me.

**O** LORD Jesus Christ, who for the salvation of the world wast willing as at this time, to bear patiently sorrows and agony, passion and death, grant, we beseech Thee, that we, mindful of all that Thou hast borne for us, may bear our light afflictions patiently for Thy sake, so that sharing Thy sufferings we may at Thy second coming awake and go forth to meet Thee with the multitudes of Thy redeemed ones, and enter with praises into the everlasting City, and be made partakers of Thy rest and glory, who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Ghost, world without end. *Amen.*

## Monday in Holy Week.

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Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day?

CHRIST made this question His answer when His disciples warned Him that to go up toward Jerusalem would be to go towards peril and death. Great truths seldom wear so commanding an aspect as when they look out upon us from some familiar image like this. As His manner often is, the Divine Teacher here makes a commonplace fact, lying under our constant observation, — the mere duration of the daylight, — represent a great doctrine of practical religion. Having just heard, from the two sisters of Lazarus, of their brother's sickness, and knowing that he will die, Jesus proposes to His disciples to go to the bereaved house. At present they are in a place of retirement and comparative safety, — Perea, beyond the Jordan. A journey to Bethany will take Him close to Jerusalem, where bitter enemies are watching for Him. Naturally enough, His disciples remonstrate: "Master, the Jews of

late sought to stone Thee, and goest Thou thither again?" There arises, then, one of those *test-questions of character*, such as we all have sometimes to meet, where self-interest, with personal security, stands in one path, and duty, with danger, in another. He, whose joy it was to make Himself a sacrifice for us, struck directly onward in the line of His Father's will, whether it was only Bethany and its hospitable roof, or Gethsemane and Calvary beyond, with their blood and torture, that waited to receive Him.

The first thought is that it can never be otherwise than safe to do right. Almighty God fixes the length of the day, — twelve hours. While you are walking with Him, His plans protect you, His ordinances befriend you, His hands hold you up and clear the way, His sunshine flows down upon you, His invisible angels watch over you. It may not always seem so; it certainly will not so long as we look only through the eyes of sense. Clouds and darkness may *appear* to overhang the path of the just, and night to be shutting in *before its time*; but it is appearance only. No outward hindrances can shorten God's time, or take back His promise. Your "day," for His service, has just twelve hours. There may be pointed swords or treacherous pitfalls, sneering faces or the substantial scourges of poverty,

solitude and hatred, planted at every step, from this safe Perea over to Jerusalem and the Judgment Hall; no matter; if God's will and word command you to go by that road, your strength will be equal to your day, and your day will be as long as it ought to be. If it seems to be cut short here, it will be filled out in a glorious immortality, — not an hour lost.

On the other hand, no paltry calculations can keep us out of harm's way, when we are turning back from Him who seeth the end from the beginning. What is the rest of life worth, however lengthened out, to the deserter from the army, or the hireling that straggles to the rear on the morning of the battle? You may be young or old; a man of business or a woman in retirement; no matter what you are, or where you are. If your enemies are in any Jerusalem, and you run away from your post of dangerous duty into any desert, there are ten thousand unforeseen mischances there, any one of which may make an end of you, or an end of your peace, because you have made an end of your Christian manhood, and of the fellowship and pledged protection of your Lord. There is no security, no daylight anywhere, but in Him.

By being a loyal soldier of Christ, brave and self-sacrificing, you may, perhaps, cut off some part of

your life on earth, and perhaps not. God only knows ; life and breath are His ; so is the life everlasting. But what are a few days more or less ? What are a few *more* worth to you, if life is all hollow, base, and worldly, with no covenant of grace and mercy over it ? What a few *less*, if life is filled up with honor, and its short day melts the sooner into the perfect light of heaven ?

Hence this answer of our Lord brings in, for the solution of these deep questions about duty and danger, another arbiter besides conscience, and that is Christian faith. Conscience may render a clear verdict enough, but she is not strong enough to execute it alone. The soul anxiously inquires, Suppose this *is* right, and I follow conscience, — who is on the side of right ? Who will stand by me and bear me out ? Who will keep my feet from falling, my eyes from tears, — or pity them when they come, — and this soul from death ? Christ replies, Are there not twelve hours of light, — and is not that light sent down by Him who has promised that whoever walks in it shall not stumble ? That is, entertain no fears about results. The daylight you walk in is not drawn from within you, and your success will not be. The day's length is fixed. No *human* interference can hinder the dawn or hasten the twilight. Everything is ordered and falls into place.

All things work together for good to them that fear God. Acknowledge Him, and thy foot shall not stumble.

The second thought is that in following out the right line of Christian duty, there is to be no rash defiance of danger and no wild disregard of fit times and seasons. In the hands of Christ, on His calm lips, or in His wise and patient example, we never find zeal blind-folded, decision running into obstinacy, or devotion cut loose from reason. There are repeated instances in the life of our Lord where He carefully withheld Himself from useless exposure. He avoided provocation. He forbade His friends to precipitate upon Him or them a premature arrest by an indiscriminate display of the "pearls" of His Gospel. We are told of His unfolding the great mystery of His Messiahship gradually to the people, as they were able to bear it. How sublimely clear His spirit is of all that eager ambition which mixes up a personal willfulness with the high behests of God's Law, the false independence and false boldness which despise experience, reject authority, scorn the past, and push their way by a headstrong pride! Living habitually in the secret counsels of the Father, acting always for that Holy will which it was His meat and drink to do, flattery could not bring Him forward or opposition drive Him back-



ward. There was time enough for the work given to do, but not one moment for idleness, or display, or sentimental indulgence. This is the exact difference between true earnestness and fanaticism. Fanaticism is inflamed and driven by passion, pride, and bigotry; true earnestness, born of a meek and lowly faith, waits only to know God's will; and when once that is revealed cannot be kept back from obeying it. There are twelve hours in its day.

Blending these two principles together, — the *courage* of faith and the *humility* of faith, — we arrive at this large and comforting doctrine for Christian practice: *There is room enough in every life for all that life's work.* God has a plan for every human spirit's probation. Nothing falls out of that plan by accident. Nothing interferes with it, but our own rebellion. Even our freedom has its fixed limits which it never can overpass. In little details of conduct, a moment at a time, we may seem to have our own way; but in the long run we are overruled. How common it is to hear resolute, energetic men confessing their whole earthly course a failure! One of the saddest documents I ever heard read was a private letter written by one of our most distinguished countrymen to another, in which, though he had been crowned with an almost unprecedented succession of honors, and had scarcely ever spoken

or written without winning the admiration of entire communities of men, he pronounced his whole career a miserable disappointment, too painful to remember. The great events that mark off and signalize existence are beyond control,—the strokes of the hammer of that clock which tells the beginning and the end of the twelve hours. None of us can determine the circumstances that direct his early steps and mould his youth; none can command the elements or accidents; none can decide when he shall be sick, or well, or find time to die. These twelve fixed hours are not of equal length to all persons. Ninety years are not too much for a good man's pilgrimage; yet another fills out a noble testimony and finishes a glorious warfare on some public battle-field or in some hidden corner of the vineyard, before the dew of youth has been dried up.

“Alike in God's all-seeing eye  
The infant's day, the patriarch's age.”

It is not so much the period that is of consequence, as the living of it all out, clearly and faithfully, in the service of the Master,—as a Heaven-appointed time.

It is for lack of faith in the God of our life that we hardly undertake even a good enterprise before beginning to be anxious about the result, impatient

to finish it and see the fruit, or afraid life will not be long enough to finish it at all. Christ's word here lifts the Christian up to a peaceable superiority over this agitation, by the side of his Lord. It bids the disheartened friends of beneficent undertakings remember that God never allows the sun to set too soon, and never crowds two days into one. It tells those who doubt whether their prayers are heard, that blessings sometime gain in richness by their slowness in coming. It tells feeble fathers and mothers, distressed lest their children should be left orphans, that there is a Father who lives and is constant even when mothers die or forget, and that He has more ways than one of training weakness into power, orphanage into patronage, the forsaken into the sons and daughters of honor singing as in the days of their youth, and valleys of Achor into Doors of Hope. It tell the lonely and sorrowing to fear none of those things that they shall suffer, because Christ has suffered for them in the flesh and overcome the world.

The doctrine is still further practical, because it rebukes and cools down that feverish haste which disorders so much human work, and is such a discreditable characteristic of a worldly-minded and irreverent age, with little faith and little love. It is certainly remarkable, that in all the life of Jesus

in the flesh, — though the weight of the world's redemption was pressing upon Him, and His ministry of eternal reconciliation was bounded by three short years, yet there is not a single step or movement of His, from first to last, that gives us an impression of haste. Always straitened till His whole work is accomplished, because the night cometh when no man can work, He is yet always deliberate. Are there not twelve hours in His day? He is almost as free from hurry as He is from sin. You see His disciples urging Him hither and thither. They want Him to go sooner, or stay later, to call down revengeful fire, or to make a more sudden manifestation. "If Thou be the Christ, show Thyself to the world." But He still bides His time, and only says His hour is not yet full come. Summoned to this very miracle of mercy at Bethany, He paused and waited, no one then knew why, tarrying four days in the place where He was. It is thus when God speaks by His Prophet of His grandest works, — laying in Zion a sure foundation and a precious corner-stone, — that He says, "He that believeth shall not make haste." Faith works, works intensely, works while all the twelve hours of the day last, and yet can wait in cheerful submission, in hope, and in peace.

There is only one thought more to be touched.

The twelve hours are to be filled up. Not one of them, or one minute or second in any of them, can we afford to throw away, or lose. Christian waiting is not idleness, but a kind of busy waiting. Whatever compassion there may be for them that come into Christ's vineyard at the eleventh hour, because no man hath hired them, we are not of those. We were all called long ago, and the reward was set before us by the Author and Finisher of our faith. There is an end of these hours, and it is near at hand. There are *only* twelve, and they are all short. They darken over in early youth, very often. They end always at the Bar of a most solemn Judgment, where small and great, those that die young and those that die old, stand together before God, and the Book of Remembrance is opened, and all are judged out of the Book.

Lent is almost gone. The months are but hours; there are but twelve of them in a year. Compared with what is to come, all our days and years now are only as a night, which is "far spent." Another "day is at hand." "If any man walk in the night he stumbleth. If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the Light of this world." Who of us must not look up and ask, "Oh, where is this light?" Jesus said, "I am the Light of the world. Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall not die eternally."

## Even at Eleven

God sometimes giveth space to work for heaven ;  
But yet I would not have thee wait  
Until twelfth hour of day,  
Lest, when it groweth late,  
Christ should not pass thy way;  
But haste without delay  
Into the market-place  
Of grace:  
There thou shalt find  
A Master kind,  
And liberal pay.

Take unto Thyself, O Father,  
This folded day of Thine,  
This weary day of mine.  
Its ragged corners cut me yet, —  
Oh still the jar and fret!  
Father do not forget  
That I am tired  
With this marred day of Thine,  
This erring day of mine!  
Forget not but forgive,  
And let me live  
The life divine!

**O** THOU Holy One who hast ordered the day and set each hour in its place, and who makest the morning and evening to praise Thee, help us to work with our hands the thing that is good while the day lasts, seeing that the night cometh when no man can work. Purify our minds from all vain, evil, and wandering thoughts. Enlighten our understanding. Kin-

de our affections. Strengthen our love and gratitude. And direct our hearts and bodies to the patient and diligent waiting for Christ; and bring our souls to the everlasting life and felicity of the faithful with Thee, O Christ, world without end. Amen.

## Tuesday in Holy Week.

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### DAY OF DIALOGUES AND PARABLES.

Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer.

We glory in tribulations also.

Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through Him that loved us.

In the day when I cried Thou answeredst me, and strengthenedst me with strength in my soul.

SAVIOUR, beneath thy yoke

My wayward heart doth pine;

All unaccustomed to the stroke

Of love divine.

Thy chastisements, my God, are hard to bear,

Thy cross is heavy for frail flesh to wear.

*Perishing child of clay !*

*Thy sighing I have heard ;*

*Long have I marked thy evil way,*

*How thou hast erred !*

*Yet, fear not ; by my own most holy name,*

*I will shed healing through thy stricken frame.*

Praise to Thee, gracious Lord !

I fain would be at rest ;



Oh, now fulfill Thy faithful word  
And make me blest;  
My soul would lay her heavy burden down,  
And take, with joyfulness, the promised crown.

*Stay, thou short-sighted child !  
There is much first to do.  
Thy heart so long by sin defiled,  
I must renew ;  
Thy will must here be taught to bend to mine,  
Or the sweet peace of heaven can ne'er be thine.*

Yea, Lord, but Thou canst soon  
Perfect Thy work in me,  
Till, like the pure, calm summer noon,  
I shine by Thee, —  
A moment shine, that I Thy power may trace  
Then pass in stillness to Thy heavenly place.

*Ah ! coward soul, confess  
Thou shrinkest from my cure,  
Thou tremblest at the sharp distress  
Thou must endure.  
The foes on every hand, for war arrayed,  
The thorny path in tribulation laid,*

*The process slow of years,  
The discipline of life,  
Of outward woes and secret tears,  
Sickness and strife —  
Thine idols taken from thee one by one,  
Till thou canst dare to live with me alone.*

*Some gentle souls there are,  
Who yield unto my love,  
Who, ripening fast beneath my care,  
I soon remove ;  
But thou stiffneckéd art, and hard to rule,  
Thou must stay longer in affliction's school.*

**My Maker and my King!**  
Is this Thy love to me?  
Oh that I had the lightning's wing,  
From earth to flee.  
How can I bear the heavy weight of woes,  
Thine indignation on Thy creature throws?

*Thou canst not, O my child,  
So hear my voice again ;  
I will bear all thy anguish wild,  
Thy grief, thy pain ;  
My arms shall be around thee, day by day,  
My smile shall cheer thee on thy heavenward way*

*In sickness I will be  
Watching beside thy bed,  
In sorrow thou shalt lean on me  
Thy aching head ;  
In every struggle thou shalt conqueror prove,  
Nor death itself shall sever from my love.*

**O grace beyond compare!**  
**O love most high and pure!**  
**Saviour, begin, no longer spare,**  
**I can endure;**

Only vouchsafe Thy grace, that I may live  
Unto Thy glory, who canst so forgive.

**O** THOU who art the God of patience and consolation, in every hour of suffering beneath Thy Hand strengthen us, we beseech Thee, with spiritual strength in our hearts, that we may bear every yoke and burden of Thy laying on without unwillingness. We are all unable to stand under the cross of ourselves. But Thou, O holy Jesus, who wert pleased under its distress to admit a man to bear a part of the load, Thou who bearest all for man's sake, be pleased to help us, that we may be strongest when we are weakest. If our spirits faint within us, and we are cast down, still enable us to endure whatever Thou pleasest. Give us holy consolations, and the peaceable fruit of righteousness. Let us never fall from Thee through pleasure or through pain, but so quicken our faith and support our souls that we may at last come forth from Thy furnace as gold tried in the fire, being made conquerors and more than conquerors, through Him that hath loved us, and given Himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

## Wednesday in Holy Week.

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The Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world.

IN the Apostle's ardent, rapid style, the figures often follow each other so swiftly that they seem to mingle together ; and there is sometimes a moment's confusion. But there is always one simple key that unlocks his complicated imagery, and makes the meaning plain. It is his personal loyalty, love, and faith, towards his Master. Just so far as we have the light of that same holy passion in us, while we read his writings, everything in them grows clear.

In one sentence we see three crucifixions ; and yet, under all the three, there is one and the same grand truth, one sublime principle of self-sacrificing love.

First, there is "*the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.*" This is the personal crucifixion of the Saviour Himself, — that Lamb of God whose precious blood is the only saving Life for every sinful heart in the world. It is by virtue of that one only complete and sufficient sacrifice, that every other

self-denial gets its Christian value. Hence St. Paul says, with his overpowering and exclusive energy of thankful devotion, God forbid that I should glory in anything but that!

Next is the crucifixion of that mixed and ever-present power of attraction and temptation, called "the world." "The world is crucified unto me." This fascinating, terrible Tempter, which tries the purity and honor of every soul, whether saved or lost, has to be so yoked under and broken down, so denied and killed, to all such as will be saved, that it is said to be slain on a cross. It must be humiliated, smitten, trampled under foot, by the holy strength of a regenerate will till all its eager mischief is dead, and the emancipated disciple can walk through the midst of it unhurt, in it but not of it, untainted by its corruption, and not so much as the smell of its fire on his garments.

But to that end there must be yet a third crucifixion: "And I unto the world." The suffering is thus represented as mutual, — "the world unto me, and I unto the world," — only to give energy and intensity to the expression of that profound and solemn necessity. That is, the real agency by which the worldly spirit is destroyed is not out in the world itself: for that dances on, as gay and lusty and proud and selfish as ever: but it is within you, — in the

secret pangs of the second birth to every new-born heart. It is that *giving up of the world* which tears, pierces, bleeds, crucifies our self-seeking devices. For you the cords are fastened, the limbs are stretched, the nails are driven, the blood flows, and the fainting flesh, under its torture, cries, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" And all this *giving up*, this sacrifice of passion, of admiration, of earthly pleasure, of wrong pursuits and property, of idols in business, idols in society, idols in the house, idols in the secret ambitions and lusts of the mind, — all of it is for Christ's dear and glorious sake, — *by whom*, — by whose faith and promise and life and death, by whose inestimable gift, by whose agony and bloody sweat, by whose Cross and Passion, — the blessed power is given, and the triumph of renunciation is gained.

But against all this the natural selfishness in us rises in determined opposition. It will glory in anything else rather than in the Cross; in having its own way, in reputation, in business success, in riches, in taking the lead in fashionable distinctions: it does not wish the world to be crucified to it, for the world is the theatre of its display: it does not wish itself to be crucified to the world, for there it finds all its excitements and enjoyments. Here, then, is the perpetual and deadly conflict between man's self-will and the spirit of the Cross.

We are not left in the least uncertainty as to what this giving up of selfishness is to be. The Guide deals in no vague generalities, but is wonderfully definite and plain-spoken. Not only does St. Paul set it before us under his strong images. The Gospels resound in our compromising and divided hearts, — paltering with a double purpose, and vacillating between the Church and the market, — “No man can serve two masters.” And then, lest we should lose the meaning in the generality of the language, they go on to specify three of the commoner temptations of the sensual nature, — eating, drinking, dress : “Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, nor yet for your body what ye shall put on.”

What the secularized Church among us needs, to heal its backsliding, and rouse it to new and grander power over men, is no external thing whatever, but more of this unworldly self-sacrificing mind which was in Christ Jesus. Lent and Passion Week and Good Friday are mockeries without it. What we all need, personally, to quicken our spiritual coldness or deadness, to purify us as with a refiner’s fire, to break up the clouds of doubt and discouragement and fear that hang about us, is only to get clear of this fatal entanglement in the false standards of a worldly society, and the bondage of a worldly indulgence.

This is freedom, this will be peace, — to crucify that sinful interior “world” which itself crucified the Lord of glory, and so to glory in His Cross.

“Nothing,” says the “Theologia Germanica,” “nothing burneth in hell but self-will. Therefore it hath been said, ‘Put off thine own will and there will be no hell. Sin is nothing else than that the creature willeth otherwise than God willeth. And this contradiction to God’s will is what we call, and is, disobedience, and therefore ‘Adam,’ ‘self-will,’ or the ‘old man,’ or ‘departing from God,’ do all mean one and the same thing. Had Adam eaten seven apples, and yet never claimed anything for his own, he would not have fallen; but as soon as he called something his own he fell, and would have fallen if he had never touched an apple.”

“If a man truly loves God,” said the saintly Tauler, “and has no will but to do God’s will, the whole force of the river Rhine may run at him, and will not disturb him or break his peace. If we find outward things a danger or disturbance, it comes from our appropriating to ourselves what is God’s.

“We need to become like little children, willing to let our Heavenly Father guide us, without imposing upon Him any conditions; willing to have much or little, to be learned or ignorant, to go or stay, to sit down or to rise up, to speak on or to be silent, to be



honored or dishonored, to be on the mount of joy or in the valley of humiliation,—to be anything or nothing, just as God wills. To him who has reached this blessed condition, salvation is no longer merely a possible thing outside of him, but the soul is saved and heaven already begun.”

So, too, with wonderful truth and most scriptural power, writes the spiritually-minded Culverwell: “There is nothing contrary to God in the whole world, and fights against Him, but self-will. Our only way to recover God and happiness is, not to soar up with our understandings, but to destroy this self-will of ours, and then we shall find our wings to grow again, and ourselves raised aloft into the free air of perfect liberty, which is perfect happiness. God *will* not hurt us, and hell *cannot* hurt us, if we will nothing but what God wills. Nay, then we are aided by God Himself, and the whole divinity floweth in upon us. When we have cashiered this self-will of ours, which did but shackle and confine our souls, our wills shall then be widened and enlarged, to the extent of God’s own will, which is freedom indeed.”

The narrative of the Evangelists, marking our Lord’s footsteps from day to day as He draws nigh to the darkness which enfolds and hides for a moment the supreme glory of the earth, tells us nothing of this Wednesday. A mystery of silence hangs

between us and the meek and royal sufferer. Who can doubt what was passing in His solitary spirit? The august agony, the more sublime throughout for its reserve, had already begun. The power of "the world" was just as terribly present to His sight all this day as when, a few hours after, it gleamed in the soldiers' spears, and sat in purple on Herod's throne, and dragged Him to Calvary. The suffering was there, in His soul, burdened with all the selfishness and sin of selfish and sinful men, — more than in the torn body and bleeding side. Let us never regard His Passion as a mere physical anguish. He is girding up His gentle and mighty soul to bear the last outbreak of a furious and mean self-love, which will not know and confess its Saviour and its Lord. And for this He will come to-morrow to meet His murderers, knowing that to the world and to each one of us such loss is gain, such suffering is peace, such casting down is triumph, such ashes are glory, such death is Everlasting Life.

Therefore, O friend, I would not if I might  
Rebuild my house of lies, wherein I joyed  
One time to dwell; my soul shall walk in white,  
Cast down but not destroyed.

These thorns are sharp, yet I can tread on them,  
The cup is loathsome, yet He makes it sweet:

My face is steadfast toward Jerusalem,  
My heart remembers it.

Beauty for ashes, oil of joy for grief,  
Garment of praise for spirit of heaviness:  
Although to-day, fading as doth a leaf,  
I languish and grow less,

Although to-day he prunes my tree with pain,  
Yet doth His blood nourish and warm my root;  
To-morrow I shall put forth buds again,  
And clothe myself with fruit.

Although to-day I walk in tedious ways,  
To-day His staff is turned into a rod,  
Yet will I wait for Him the appointed days,  
And stay upon my God.

**O** BLESSED Son of God, who hast suffered for our sins a more dreadful pain than we are able to know, that we might be brought out of all the fear and misery of death, have mercy upon our too great and continual love of ourselves. Grant unto us, and unto all good people that have this Thy blessed Passion now in remembrance, a deep and awful appreciation of the mystery of mercy in Thy Cross, a godly and humble life in this present world, a victory over it, and at last to dwell with Thee in the Kingdom of Heaven which Thou hast opened to all believers, where Thou livest and reignest, world without end. *Amen.*

## Thursday in Holy Week.

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If a man love not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen.

Above all these things, put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.

If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.

WERE there no other peculiar interest attached to the day before the Crucifixion than the delivery of the new commandment of love, or charity, that alone would lift this anniversary into a singular eminence and dignity. Falling when it does, in these searching commemorations, it calls us not to general contemplations of the beauty of charity, but to a fearless scrutiny of the causes of our lack of it; and first among the bad elements that make up uncharitableness we must reckon an excessive self-love. Between ourselves and those about us there is almost always going on, if not an open competition, at least a secret comparison. In that comparison, as

others sink we relatively rise. To disparage or disesteem a rival is a selfish advantage; and to selfish natures every neighbor is a rival. Other people stand in our way, — or we fancy they do, — in business, in reputation, in social favor; and, by that meaner disposition in us which allies us more to animals and devils than to saints or angels, we try to drag them down by an uncharitable judgment. In the Litany we pray to be delivered from “envy, hatred, and malice,” before we come to “uncharitableness,” and from “pride” and “vain glory” before those; but the truth is, these ugly growths all have one root; and when we begin to pray or to fight against envy or pride, the attack on uncharitableness is really begun.

Or, the process may be subtler and craftier yet. One form of self-love is self-complacency. By passing severe denunciations on other men’s errors, we compliment the delicacy of our own moral discrimination and the keenness of our sense of right. How can Haman be very far from right if he have such a horror of Mordecai’s wrong? This is the way Pharisees are made. Three crimes are committed in one; we condemn our fellows: we screen our own sin: we flatter our own self-esteem.

A second bad element in uncharitableness is a pleasurable exercise of unjust power. Characters

are torn to pieces, good names are tarnished, faults are exaggerated, not always from any deliberately calculated advantage, but simply from the relish of expending strength, and seeing the blow take effect. Men stand over the real or imagined prostration of another's fame, as children of eager animal spirits exult in tormenting insects, sportsmen in killing swift game, or pugilists in a victory of the ring. It is not absolute, conscious cruelty; it is the natural unprincipled zest of expending strength. We have heard an accomplished orator employ his learning and his eloquence in personal abuse prompted by no grudge, not even by political disagreement, but by an anatomist's delight in a professional dissection. And you have all heard two uncharitable talkers in private seat themselves, as friends, to the dismembering of an absent person's moral constitution, in the thoughtless play of satire; and then, on separating, repeat the same wicked experiment on one another. Lacking the finer ability to satirize systems, ideas, or qualities, they make the cheaper and coarser attack on individual men and women. Many of the unjust and unkind speeches which make parlors a scene of moral gladiatorship and mutilation, are only the uncharitableness of a self-asserting and self-indulging barbarity.

A third pernicious element in this destructive un-

charitableness is pride of opinion, with impatience of opposition. The popular name for it is illiberality. Into that class those fall who lack the necessary intellectual or moral dimensions to take in the actual diversity of men's original composition, and the many sidedness of truth. Narrow minds take the colored refractions in the rays of God's great, Heaven-filling light, as insults to their own vision. Confounding a necessary difference on non-essentials with a designed contradiction of their own conclusions, and in fact seeming sometimes to deny that there are any non-essentials in the whole domain of belief, they make of every person who is of another party or another interest than theirs a wrong-headed and wrong-hearted enemy to God and man. In large part, these uncharitable estimates spring more from contracted capacities than from malice on the one side, or disinterested zeal on the other. But they are sins unless they are fought and overcome.

In addition to these prolific sources of uncharitableness, with some kind of selfishness at the bottom of them all, reckon in a common confusion of honest ideas as to how far our loyalty to truth and virtue forbids us to give quarter or toleration to persons who seem to us to have departed from that truth, or violated that virtue ; and we have some conception of the tremendous obstacles that beset the growth of the greatest Christian grace.

What principles are there to guide us in overcoming these obstacles and fulfilling Christ's law of love ?

First of all is the great rule to distinguish between the error itself and the living man that holds the error ; or the vice, which by its nature is altogether evil, and the human heart of the human brother or sister which with its mixed ingredients is stained with the vice ; hating and condemning the vice, but loving its victim ; nay, hating the vice the more because it has made him its victim. You will say that, in practice, such discriminations are extremely difficult. That is true ; but they are none the less, for that, our Christian business ; and no great services to Christ are very easy.

We despise and wrong each other from sheer neglect to understand each other. Between the publican and the Pharisee, between St. Peter and St. James, between some proud woman whose life-long study has been the preservation of her dignity, and some unguarded, careless child of the affections, there is scarcely enough in common, by nature, to furnish a foothold for human kindness ; and unless that blessed interpreter, Christian Charity, comes in with her considerate suggestions and favoring imaginations, to invent some gracious theory, and to reconcile them, they must hate each other forever.



Consider, further, that miseducation, corrupting or misleading examples, the circumstances of early youth unknown to you, domestic irritation or neglect, positive instruction taking the child's mind on its weakest side, may have secretly prepared the way for that immorality which now defaces a fair name or distresses a household. One has been continually baffled and goaded by disappointment; one has been soured by an uncongenial home; one has never known the sunshine of a cheering, encouraging accent or look; one has been stung by aggravating misunderstandings; one has been imitative, and has seen none but base or ridiculous patterns. How suddenly and completely many of our most unhesitating and unqualified condemnations would be silenced, if the whole early history of the wretched subject of them could be laid open to us! We should rather exclaim, in awe-struck and grateful wonder, at the Providence that made our fortunes to differ, and the tender mercies that prevented us!

Charity requires us further to remember that whatever evil our neighbors suffer themselves to do, we can never know how much they are tempted to do which they effectually restrain. There are terrible battles fought in all human breasts, out of human sight. Could we know all that is resisted, and all that is overcome, behind these erring lips and lives,

we should often have to admire the virtue rather than condemn the fault.

These are some of the secret sources of that ever-active and prolific disturber of our world, — an uncharitable temper, with its uncharitable tongue. When we turn to the beauty and the glory of its celestial opposite, is it not amply worth all the pains and the struggle that gain the mastery? No touch or colors can paint the heavenly loveliness of love, like the Apostle's, on whose own valiant and hardy manhood love sat, with the charm with which power and courage always wear the grace of gentleness. Having been just speaking of gifts of tongues, he takes up the image, and tells us there is no magic or fascination of melody in that instrument of marvelous delicacy and sympathy, the human voice, like the music in the accent of charity. Nay, the image is bolder than that. Leave out that secret charm of charity, and even the anthems that fill heaven with harmony will be jangling jars of dissonance, tormenting the ear. "Though I speak with the tongues of men *and of angels*, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal." He has been writing to the Corinthians, too, of certain supernatural endowments of the early Church. Not the brightest and rarest of these gifts could make up for the absence of this diviner attribute, —

attainable to the lowliest and plainest Christian in the Church, — Christian love. “Though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge, and though I have all miraculous faith so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.” We are apt to call our little almsgivings, and our insignificant and broken sacrifices of time and comfort for Christ, “charity.” See how the searching doctrine runs down deeper than this superficial notion, tears open our disguised and complacent self-seekings, and shows martyrdom itself to be the possible evidence of some fanatic ambitions or fame-procuring passion. “Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not true, inbred, self-renouncing, and Christianized charity, it profiteth me nothing.” Next follows that radiant list of celestial offices wrought out by this fairest-born of the daughters of the sky, — such as only the love of lovers and mothers can even faintly imitate, — rising in a constantly ascending and accumulating series of spiritual honors, till it culminates in the climax of eternity. “Charity suffereth long and is kind, charity envieth not, charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the

truth, beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things: charity *never fail-eth.*" Yes, see its eternity, — its immortal vigor and freshness. For the door of Heaven itself is thrown open, and lo! Charity is there, as she was forever, in the bosom of God, — now in the hearts of His redeemed people. All personal accomplishments, intellectual masteries, miraculous exploits, prophecies, tongues, earthly knowledge, are passing away; the brightest lights go out; the finest brain is broken; the most eloquent voice is still. They "fail;" they "cease;" they "vanish away." They are all "in part," and are "done away," "when that which is perfect is come." Half-blind, and groping, we see "as through a glass darkly." How true that is! The skies are clouded. Our very eyes are weak, and ache with straining to see. But all that lovely air is clear; and when the purer eyes of the spiritual body are opened, without dimness, doubt, or uncertainty, in the wondering fullness of open vision, the children of Christian charity shall see face to face, and in the "love that passeth knowledge" know as they are known.

In these days of tender commemoration of our Lord's loving sorrow we multiply our acts of devotion; we confirm our faith; we renew our hope. Are we doing anything to enlarge and perfect the

charity which is greater than either? Empty and profitless before God will all our prayers be, if we carry over from these holy services into Easter-week and the life afterwards any unhealed enmity, any uncharitable grudge, any unforgiving hatred, a heart unreconciled to any child of God.

With sound of lute and psalter  
I laid my gift one morning on the altar,  
And much I marveled why  
There came no sacred fire from on high  
My offering to consume.  
While kneeling on in dark and wandering gloom,  
I heard a voice from heaven say,  
“ Arise and go thy way;  
First be thou with thy brother reconciled  
Ere thou dost bring thine offering as a child.”  
I wept.  
Then through the stillness of the temple crept,  
Struggling with shame and pride.  
I sought my brother in the busy street,  
And drew him gently from the crowd aside —  
“ Give me thy hand; as brothers let us meet.  
Revenge is bitter, but forgiveness sweet.”  
And lo! that moment in the eastern skies,  
I saw the smoke of sacrifice arise,  
And knew that fire divine  
Had fallen on the offering that was mine.

**W**E adore Thee, we praise and glorify Thee, and we give thanks unto Thee, O Son of the Living God, who in the great and divine charity wherewith Thou hast loved the world

hast borne the suffering of death. Thou givest to all Thy People of the inestimable benefits of Thy most precious sacrifice, and upbraidest not. For when Thou wast despised and mocked and crucified, Thou didst not open Thy mouth to complain, but didst pray to the Father for them that persecuted and tormented Thee. Oh grant to us a greater measure of this Thy forbearing and charitable grace, that we may be reconciled and merciful to all Thy creatures, and so follow the blessed steps of Thy most holy life into the same place where Thou hast gone before, there to worship and praise Thee, world without end. *Amen.*

## Good Friday.

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For I delivered unto you, first of all, that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures.

“FIRST of all:” that fixes the place of the Saviour’s *sacrifice* among the acts of His ministry and the powers of His mediation. That determines where the Cross stands in the moral scenery of the Universe; where this commemoration of the Lord’s Passion belongs among the days of the year; where the doctrine of redemption must be held among the truths and teachings of the Christian system of faith. For the Apostle, when he says, “first of all,” does not speak of the *order of time* in which he delivers his inspired instructions to the Church; but of the order of magnitude. Notice, for a moment, this relation in which he places the atonement for sin to the other principal topics of his instruction. He has been dealing, not long before, very acutely and profoundly, — as you will see if you look back along the links of that chain of his great argument to the

Corinthians, so strong in thought and so ardent and glowing in the fire of his feeling, — with the workings of the Christian conscience, in the practical questions of an upright life, — conscience towards oneself, towards other men's consciences, and towards God. But what would that keen and subtle faculty be, he asks, with its awful discriminations between right and wrong, setting up its throne of judgment in every breast, — what would conscience be, but a tormentor, and an avenger, if there were no reconciling Mercy with it, no ransom from its prison house, no pledged and purchased pardon for the penitence it awakens, no Christ dying for our sins? A little later, he pronounces that incomparable panegyric upon Charity, putting it foremost in the impersonal trinity of graces: but the real sublimity of that matchless description is that it gives an ideal which has its actual embodiment only in the love of the Cross, and of Him who was crucified upon it; nor can there be a drop of it, anywhere, in all the cups of kindness that the world passes about, having the taste of the true heavenly sweetness in it, which does not spring from the fountain at the foot of that Cross. Farther on, he enters into some explanations of the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit to the believer, — those supernatural *charismata* that lightened on the minds and loosened the tongues of the first witnesses



for Jesus against the principalities and powers of the world. But even these marvels of spiritual utterance, he declares, are as nothing compared to that Sacrifice for sin which is the one unutterable mystery and miracle of God, and *will be* when tongues have ceased and knowledge has vanished away. Then he is proceeding to unfold the doctrine of the Resurrection, in that great burial-chapter which throws open the gate of heaven over every disciple's grave. But he takes pains to pause and tell us that *before* the doctrine of the Resurrection, underneath it, prerequisite to it, is the doctrine of the Dying of the Lord ; "this mortal " puts on its "immortality " only by receiving the gift of the atonement ; man lives again from the Cross, or else he never would live again from the broken tomb ; the Easter sun gets all its singular light by its contrast with the Good Friday darkness ; "I delivered unto you," indeed, he says, "how that Christ rose again the third day," but I "delivered unto you *first of all*," as the primary and supreme reality, "how that He died for our sins, according to the Scriptures."

Confining our attention to what he wrote to the Corinthians alone, the proof would be abundant and irrefutable. Standing before those susceptible and cultivated admirers of the high things and the great things and the beautiful things of this world, with a

humility of self-denial the more impressive because of his own passionate intellectual aspiration, he says quietly, in the grand meekness of that self-mastery, which nothing else but the Cross had wrought in him, — “I determined not to know anything among you,” — neither poetry nor philosophy, neither ethics nor art, *nothing* “save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified,” — and Him not living in righteousness merely, not teaching a heavenly and holy wisdom for men to live by merely, not the perfect example, or the attested miracle-worker and Prophet, or the Head of a new school of spiritual science merely, — as some modern dilutions of Christianity tell you, — no, but “HIM CRUCIFIED.” Dividing the whole world of mankind into its two moral hemispheres by his comprehensive classification, he faces them both — Jew and Greek — with his one all-sufficient message, — “The Jews require a sign, the Greeks seek after wisdom ; but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block and unto the Greeks foolishness.” When he saw there some Corinthian converts making a party-leader of himself, and rallying around him, in their admiration of his energy and zeal, for party-purposes, scheming for his advantage to the detriment of his brother Apostles, he points them away from himself to that supreme and central Object of their faith, pleading only for Him : “Was

Paul crucified for you?" When he entreats for purity among them, and the purging out of their sensuality, this is his reason: "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us." Keep your bodies holy as temples, for they are "bought with a price," — and that price is Jesus' blood. When he remonstrates against misleading or tempting an unguarded heart, — this is his expostulation: "Shall the weak brother perish, *for whom Christ died?*" When he urges them with all that tenderness which sometimes softened into singular sweetness the robust strength of his manliness, — to cherish a forgiving and forbearing temper, this is his motive: "If I forgave anything, to whom I forgave it, for your sakes forgave I it *in the person of Christ.*" When he sets forth the dignity and authority of the Ministry in the Church, which Christ ordained, he is careful to exhibit it as the "ministry of reconciliation," preaching and publishing the sufferings and atonement of the Crucified. When his own sufferings and weakness oppress him, this is his consolation, that in that infirm and aching body he can "bear about the dying of the Lord Jesus." And when he comes to offer to the reverential reception of the Church that most precious of all its privileges and most blessed of all its helps, the Supper of the Lord, — this is the inmost meaning he assigned to it it shows forth the Lord's *death* till He come; it rep-

resents the dying love ; its profaners are they who do not discern the Lord's broken body there. It is plain enough where the Apostle Paul sets the doctrine of the Propitiatory Sacrifice in the New Testament system of theology, and among the practical powers and consolations of the Christian life. He sets it where the Church evangelic and Catholic finds it, and has kept it, in the supreme and central place.

Let us turn from the great Apostle to the Master Himself. Keeping Him faithful company, through the vivid narrative and clear report of the Evangelists, from the beginning to the end, where should we say He Himself lays the chief stress of His whole mediatorial work for the world ? Where does He seem to regard Himself as most precisely and completely fulfilling the end of His appearing and the will of the Father ? At what point in the whole history does the grand consummation come ? Around what spot does the most momentous interest gather ? For what scene does all the rest appear evidently to have been a preparation ? *When* was that " hour " of which He exclaimed, — " Now is the hour come that the Son of Man should be glorified ? " It was not when he was delivering, by seaside and wayside, those searching and inexhaustible parables that the mind of man has never wearied of exploring since. It was not when He preached the sermon of all ages

with the mountain for His pulpit, or at the gate of the temple offered the thirsty people, in His doctrine, the water of everlasting life, — speaking as man never spake. It was not when He walked on the sea, or fed the five thousand, or healed the sick, or drove the traffickers from the courts of His Father's House, or raised the dead, or even on the Mount of Transfiguration, where the voice out of the cloud testified to His Divinity. No, not then. Not in the teaching, the example, in the delivering of any new truth, or in miraculous works, as wonderful in their mercy as their power. We must all feel, if we read deeply and in sympathy with the page, that through all these deeds and discourses there was one constant solemn undertone of prophecy, — foreshadowing the Cross, — the death which He should accomplish at Jerusalem.

So stands the testimony for the supremacy of the Saviour's sacrifice, among the facts of His ministry, and the powers of His mediation. We should leave the representation of the subject all unfinished, if we did not turn to the other side of it, and see there how this doctrine meets our own practical, human wants, furnishing to every sinning heart in the world just the relief and the remedy it needs. What then is it that such a heart, be it yours or mine, needs, — “first of all ;” what must Christ's minister, or mis-

sionary, the Christian mother, the Christian watcher by the sick and dying, the Christian nurse in the hospital, yes, the good soldier and servant of Christ everywhere, — have it to say, “first of all,” when such a heart, of child or man, — turns at last, in the blessed anxiety of repentance, and asks, How can I be saved? What is this religion of yours? What will it do for me? The answer, the message is, “While we were yet sinners Christ died for us.” There has never yet been found an intellectual or moral or social condition too high or too low for this doctrine. No debasement has been too *vile*, and no natural purity has been too *refined* for it. The explorations of Christian missionaries have found no nation or tribe on the face of the earth, — even where the very idea of any deity was most nearly extinct, — in which this simple message, “Christ died for our sins,” has not been apprehended, seized, rejoiced in, and lived upon, — as the opening eye welcomes light. A benighted East India Pagan, his mind weak with age and imbruted by years of superstition, has been known to awake into a clear and rational faith by reading on a scrap of a castaway leaf of the Bible, “The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin.” A rude Indian child of the western woods, untaught, has been known to spell out from a few rude signs a satisfying and abiding assurance that to trust Christ’s

Cross is to be safe forever. Hooker and Butler, Ambrose and Augustine, Anselm and Dante, Bossuet and Edwards, if asked on what their hope of everlasting life rested, would have answered in the same simple words, — “Christ died for our sins.” It is not a deduction of a science or the result of a process: it goes straight like a flash of light to the suffering soul. Nothing will do, for a *Gospel*, that leaves *any* trouble incurable, any sorrow uncomforted, any sin beyond forgiveness. The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from *all* sin, all its kinds, and all its degrees, — the hard cold sins of avarice and hypocrisy; the hot, impulsive sins of passion and desperation. The most perfectly devised system of morality, or even of spirituality, if the Cross is left out of it, can do nothing like that. There are palliations, and there are supports, for nearly all the evils and miseries of our lives *but one*. That one is the deep-struck conviction of wrong with God.

“Not poppy, nor mandragora,  
Nor all the drowsy syrups of the world,”

can drug that to sleep. When this tremendous sense of sin and judgment wakes up and takes hold of us, all the other resources that helped us are stricken down. You may stand before a man restless and agonized under that conviction, — and you may re-

peat to him any aphorism, any promise, any proposition, of any philosophic system that was ever originated among men, — but it fails to meet the want. If he is ever satisfied and comforted, it is by this divine declaration alone, — Christ died for our sins.

The message must be one that can be put into very few words, words very easily understood, and that do their work with quick power. Grant all that may be claimed of the advantage of a deliberate and gradually growing faith, where all the faculties of reason, affection, conscience, and will consent together, and the Christian character is built up day by day to its completion. I claim as much of that advantage as any, where it may be had! But remember, there are ten thousand cases where life and death struggle together in a man's breast, in one short embrace, and there is but little time or strength for a process of the mind. Tell him *then* that the years of a good life, that a faithful endeavor to do about right, or that an indiscriminate and universal indulgence of Heaven for good and bad alike, will save him, — you mock him. Tell him a Saviour has died for his sins, and to believe that, — and then, instantly, the old things pass away, the new man is put on, — and like the dying thief that, as on this day, on the Cross, cried, "Lord remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom," — his penitent soul may be made white, and his pardon be sealed in heaven.



So universal, so satisfying, so swift, is the remedy of Christ's sacrifice for the soul's sin. A great deal in the edifying of character, and the sanctifying of life, and the growing in holiness, will remain to be done, beyond all this, please God, under the appointed ordinances of the Church. But that soul has passed from death into life. Its peace has begun, and begun to be like a river. That soul has only to *abide* in the vine, where faith has grafted it in, to bear fruit unto life eternal.

I saw again. Behold Heaven's open door!  
Behold a throne! The Seraphim stood o'er it;  
The white robed Elders fell upon the floor  
And flung their crowns before it.

I saw a wondrous book. An angel strong  
To Heaven and Earth proclaimed his loud appeals:  
But a hush passed across the Seraph's song,  
For none might loose the seals.

And straightway up above  
Stood in the midst a WONDROUS LAMB, snow-white,  
Heart-wounded with the deep, sweet wounds of love,  
Eternal, infinite.

Then rose the song no ear had heard before!  
Then from the white-robed throng high anthems woke,  
And fast as Spring-tide on the sounding shore  
The Hallelujahs broke.

**H**EAR us, O Lord Christ, crucified for our redemption, and remember now the day when Thou didst commend Thy blessed Spirit into the hands of Thy Heavenly Father, when with a torn body and bleeding temples and a broken heart Thou didst wonderfully suffer and mercifully die for our sins. We beseech Thee, O Thou brightness and Image and Love of God, so to heal and transform us by Thy most precious death, that being dead unto the world we may live only unto Thee, and that at the last hour of our departing from this mortal life we may commit our souls, reconciled and cleansed, unto Thine Eternal Hands, and that Thou mayest receive us into life immortal, there to reign with Thee world without end. *Amen.*

## Saturday in Holy Week.

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Remember, therefore, how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee. Be watchful and strengthen the things which remain.

Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

If thou wilt walk in my ways, and if thou wilt keep my charge, I will give thee places to walk in among these that stand by.

He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death; I will give him to eat of the tree of life which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.

THERE is a great question for us all, at this solemn time, when the services of the Forty Days are closing, and our Lord's glorious Kingdom is nearer by one whole round of holy memorial days. Let each person consider whether he has yet applied himself in earnest to the plain simple duty of honoring and praising Christ in His Church, and following Him in His Life, so evidently set forth in this

Lenten history. Our Lord, we know, once told the Pharisees that if the multitudes about Him should hold their peace and not take their part in the great Processional Hymn that greeted Him as He approached the sacred city, the very stones would immediately cry out. It would be such unaccountable ingratitude and wanton unbelief that all things in heaven and earth would have a voice given them to exclaim against it. Surely He spoke it of those also who at any time stay scornfully or lazily away from the blessed worship of His House. They do not really believe His Kingdom, do not heartily care for it; how can they look for any portion in it when it comes? This is a warning to those who being masters of their own time and motions set themselves conscientiously no fixed rule in the matter of serving their Lord in His Sanctuary, but come or stay away just as suits their fancy at the time. Christ does not leave you at liberty to make one among those who own and praise Him, or to hold your peace. He expects one and all to join His Family and come to His House, as He has given all commandment and help and strength to do. His Eye sees all in the congregation. His Ear hears all in the responses. Let not man, woman, or child be wanting, but every heart and every tongue join gladly and reverently in the Hosannas of His public adoration. If this

has not begun with you already, begin it with the awakening of Easter morning.

But there is an admonition also for the regular church-goers. Our very Prayer Books seem to ask us, now on Easter Even, how we have used them during the Lent and Holy Week that are past. We have turned over their leaves from day to day. Have our minds and hearts gone along with what we saw there? We have seemed to be following Jesus so far on His way. Here we behaved like those His first followers whom we heard Him so graciously approving at the beginning of this week? To be like them we should have stript ourselves of our precious things, the things we most value, our own worldly admirations and luxuries and fancies, and laid them at His Feet. The thoughts that were most welcome and delightful to us, if they were not religious or innocent thoughts, should have been diligently banished from our minds, — at least when we were at our prayers. And wherever we were it should have been a study and joy to us to find out continually little silent ways of giving up something to our Saviour, of making some real sacrifice for His sake. How eagerly that multitude gathered about Him, to bring if it were but the branch of a tree to show Him homage! When shall we be like them, and see others around us like them, earnestly watch-

ing for every little chance of doing Him honor, or waiting on those, the sick, the poor, and the ignorant, whom He reckons as part of His Body? The very heathen in their blindness might cry out if we hold back our hands from such works of love in His Name: and if in any part of our worship we are backward or negligent or insincere, they will put us to shame by their greater diligence. And may we not well cry out upon ourselves when we think how often, during this hallowed season that is now drawing to an end, we have been unthankful for mercies, careless of God's Law, anxious to please ourselves, ready to blame others, forgetful of duties, heedless of doing as we would be done by, we, the regular church-goers, irreverent or idle or impatient? These questions mark the offerings for which He looks who is our Saviour and our King, — as He passes on the way in the midst of us from His Cross to His Glory, towards the true and heavenly Jerusalem, and casts His Eye around to see if we are following Him and waiting on Him as we ought. We see Him not, but He sees us. He watches every step, every tone, every look; and soon He will be at the city gate. And soon our Guide will manifest Himself as our Judge. Time will end, our resurrection will come and eternity begin. Then if not before we shall wish in earnest that we had regarded His

invitations, that we had laid our wills at His Feet, that we had sought out ways of serving Him. Well for us if we can say already, and say then for the last time among those who will be numbered with His Saints in glory everlasting, "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord!" He will soon appear. Shall we be ready?

"Whither goest Thou, O Saviour,  
Without royal diadem,  
With Thy regal hand unsceptred?"  
"Bethlehem."

"Whither goest Thou, O Saviour,  
Lord of Life and Lord of Death,  
Light of men, in darkness shining?"  
"Nazareth."

"Whither goest Thou, O Saviour,  
Second of the Trinity,  
Blessing joy and soothing sorrow?"  
"Galilee."

"Whither goest Thou, O Saviour?  
We would rise and follow Thee,  
Glory of Thy people Israel."  
"Calvary."

"Whither goest Thou, O Saviour,  
From the grave returned to be  
Resurrection, Life, and Glory?"  
"Bethany."

“ Whither hast Thou gone, O Saviour,  
Lord of purity? ”

“ Whither I have gone, thou knowest.  
I am He,

“ Who hath overcome and conquered;  
Those who follow me  
Yet shall hear my voice — ‘ Ye blessed,  
Come and see.’ ”

**O** GOD, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of the whole Family in heaven and earth, we bow our knees unto Thee, praying that Thou wouldest forgive all the sins of our holy things and of our holy times and that Thou wouldest grant us, according to the riches of Thy glory, to be strengthened with might by Thy Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in our hearts by faith; that we, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all Saints what is the length and breadth and depth and height, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that we may be filled with all the fullness of God. Now unto Him, the Resurrection and the Life, who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be glory in the Church throughout all ages world without end! *Amen.*







